

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## A FIRST FAMILY OF TASAJARA.

BY BRET HARTE.

### CHAPTER XI.

"READERS of *The Clarion* will have noticed that allusion has been frequently made in these columns to certain rumours concerning the early history of Tasajara which were supposed to affect the pioneer record of Daniel Harcourt. It was deemed by the conductors of this journal to be only consistent with the fearless and independent duty undertaken by *The Clarion* that these rumours should be fully chronicled as part of the information required by the readers of a first-class newspaper, unbiassed by any consideration of the social position of the parties, but simply as a matter of news. For this *The Clarion* does not deem it necessary to utter a word of apology. But for that editorial comment or attitude which the proprietors felt was justified by the reliable sources of their information they now consider it only due in honour to themselves, their readers, and Mr. Harcourt to fully and freely apologise. A patient and laborious investigation enables them to state that the alleged facts published by *The Clarion* and copied by other journals are utterly unsupported by testimony, and the charges—although more or less vague—which were based upon them are equally untenable. We are now satisfied that one 'Elijah Curtis,' a former pioneer of Tasajara who disappeared five years ago, and was

No. 386.—VOL. LXV.

supposed to be drowned, has not only made no claim to the Tasajara property, as alleged, but has given no sign of his equally alleged resuscitation and present existence, and that on the minutest investigation there appears nothing either in his disappearance, or the transfer of his property to Daniel Harcourt, that could in any way disturb the uncontested title to Tasajara or the unimpeachable character of its present owner. The whole story now seems to have been the outcome of one of those stupid rural hoaxes too common in California."

"Well," said Mrs. Ashwood laying aside *The Clarion* with a sceptical shrug of her pretty shoulders, as she glanced up at her brother. "I suppose this means that you are going to propose again to the young lady?"

"I have," said Jack Shipley; "that's the worst of it—and got my answer before this came out."

"Jack!" said Mrs. Ashwood, thoroughly surprised,

"Yes! You see, Conny, as I told you three weeks ago, she said she wanted time to consider—that she scarcely knew me, and all that! Well, I thought it wasn't exactly a gentleman's business to seem to stand off after that last attack on her father, and so, last week, I went down to San José where she was staying and begged her not to keep me in suspense. And, by Jove! she froze me with a look

and said that with these aspersions on her father's character, she preferred not to be under obligations to any one."

"And you believed her?"

"Oh hang it all! Look here, Conny—I wish you'd just try for once to find out some good in that family, besides what that sentimental young widower John Milton may have. You seem to think because they've quarrelled with *him* there isn't a virtue left among them."

Far from seeming to offer any suggestion of feminine retaliation, Mrs. Ashwood smiled sweetly. "My dear Jack, I have no desire to keep you from trying your luck again with Miss Clementina, if that's what you mean, and indeed I shouldn't be surprised if a family who felt a *mésalliance* as sensitively as the Harcourts felt that affair of their son's, would be as keenly alive to the advantages of a good match for their daughter. As to young Mr. Harcourt, he never talked to me of the vices of his family, nor has he lately troubled me much with the presence of his own virtues. I haven't heard from him since we came here."

"I suppose he is satisfied with the Government berth you got for him," returned her brother drily.

"He was very grateful to Senator Flynn, who appreciates his talents, — but who offered it to him as a mere question of fitness," replied Mrs. Ashwood with great precision of statement. "But you don't seem to know he declined it on account of his other work."

"Preferred his old Bohemian ways, eh? You can't change those fellows, Conny. They can't get over the fascinations of vagabondage. Sorry your lady-patroness scheme didn't work. Pity you couldn't have promoted him in the line of his profession, as the Grand Duchess of Girolstein did Fritz."

"For Heaven's sake, Jack, go to Clementina! You may not be successful, but there at least the perfect gentle-

manliness and good taste of your illustrations will not be thrown away."

"I think of going to San Francisco to-morrow anyway," returned Jack with affected carelessness. "I'm getting rather bored with this wild seaside watering-place and its glitter of ocean and hopeless background of mountain. It's nothing to me that 'there's no land nearer than Japan' out there. It may be very healthful to the tissues but it's weariness to the spirit, and I don't see why we can't wait at San Francisco till the rains send us further south, as well as here."

He had walked to the balcony of their sitting-room in the little seaside hotel where this conversation took place, and gazed discontentedly over the curving bay and sandy shore before him. After a slight pause Mrs. Ashwood stepped out beside him.

"Very likely I may go with you," she said with a perceptible tone of weariness. "We will see after the post arrives."

"By the way, there is a little package for you in my room that came this morning. I brought it up, but forgot to give it to you. You'll find it on my table."

Mrs. Ashwood abstractedly turned away and entered her brother's room from the same balcony. The forgotten parcel, which looked like a roll of manuscript, was lying on his dressing-table. She gazed attentively at the handwriting on the wrapper and then gave a quick glance around her. A sudden and subtle change came over her. She neither flushed nor paled, nor did the delicate lines of expression in her face quiver or change. But as she held the parcel in her hand her whole being seemed to undergo some exquisite suffusion. As the medicines which the Arabian physician had concealed in the hollow handle of the mallet permeated the languid royal blood of Persia, so some volatile balm of youth seemed to flow in upon her with the contact of that strange mis- sive and transform her weary spirit.

"Jack!" she called in a high clear voice.

But Jack had already gone from the balcony, when she reached it with an elastic step and a quick youthful swirl and rustling of her skirt. He was lighting his cigar in the garden.

"Jack," she said, leaning half over the railing, "come back here in an hour and we'll talk over that matter of yours again."

Jack looked up eagerly and as if he might even come up then, but she added quickly, "In about an hour—I must think it over," and withdrew.

She re-entered the sitting room, shut the door carefully and locked it, half pulled down the blind, walking once or twice around the table on which the parcel lay, with one eye on it like a graceful cat. Then she suddenly sat down, took it up with a grave practical face, examined the postmark curiously, and opened it with severe deliberation. It contained a manuscript and a letter of four closely written pages. She glanced at the manuscript with bright approving eyes, ran her fingers through its leaves and then laid it carefully and somewhat ostentatiously on the table beside her. Then, still holding the letter in her hand, she rose and glanced out of the window at her bored brother lounging towards the beach and at the heaving billows beyond, and returned to her seat. This apparently important preliminary concluded, she began to read.

There were, as already stated, four blessed pages of it! All vital, earnest, palpitating with youthful energy, preposterous in premises, precipitate in conclusions—yet irresistible and convincing to every woman in their illogical sincerity. There was not a word of love in it, yet every page breathed a wholesome adoration; there was not an epithet or expression that a greater prude than Mrs. Ashwood would have objected to, yet every sentence seemed to end in a caress. There was not a line of poetry in it, and scarcely a figure or simile, and yet it was poetical.

Boyishly egotistic as it was in attitude, it seemed to be written less of himself than to her; in its delicate because unconscious flattery, it made her at once the provocation and excuse. And yet so potent was its individuality that it required no signature. No one but John Milton Harcourt could have written it. His personality stood out of it so strongly that once or twice Mrs. Ashwood almost unconsciously put up her little hand before her face with a half mischievous, half deprecating smile, as if the big honest eyes of its writer were upon her.

It began by an elaborate apology for declining the appointment offered him by one of her friends, which he was bold enough to think had been prompted by her kind heart. That was like her, but yet what she might do to any one; and he preferred to think of her as the sweet and gentle lady who had recognised his merit without knowing him, rather than the powerful and gracious benefactress who wanted to reward him when she did know him. The crown that she had all unconsciously placed upon his head that afternoon at the little hotel at Crystal Spring was more to him than the Senator's appointment; perhaps he was selfish, but he could not bear that she who had given so much should believe that he could accept a lesser gift. All this and much more! Some of it he had wanted to say to her in San Francisco at times when they had met, but he could not find the words. But she had given him the courage to go on and do the only thing he was fit for, and he had resolved to stick to that, and perhaps do something once more that might make him hear again her voice as he had heard it that day, and again see the light that had shone in her eyes as she sat there and read. And this was why he was sending her a manuscript. She might have forgotten that she had told him a strange story of her cousin who had disappeared—which she thought he might at some time work up. Here it was. Per-

haps she might not recognise it again, in the way he had written it here; perhaps she did not really mean it when she had given him permission to use it—but he remembered her truthful eyes and believed her—and in any event it was hers to do with what she liked. It had been a great pleasure for him to write it and think that she would see it; it was like seeing her himself—that was in *his better self*—more worthy the companionship of a beautiful and noble woman than the poor young man she would have helped. This was why he had not called the week before she went away. But for all that, she had made his life less lonely, and he should be ever grateful to her. He could never forget how she unconsciously sympathised with him that day over the loss that had blighted his life for ever,—yet even then he did not know that she, herself, had passed through the same suffering. But just here the stricken widow of thirty, after a vain attempt to keep up the knitted gravity of her eyebrows, bowed her dimpling face over the letter of the blighted widower of twenty, and laughed so long and silently that the tears stood out like dew on her light-brown eyelashes.

But she became presently severe again, and finished her reading of the letter gravely. Then she folded it carefully, deposited it in a box on her table which she locked. After a few minutes, however, she unlocked the box again and transferred the letter to her pocket. The serenity of her features did not relax again although her previous pretty prepossession of youthful spirit was still indicated in her movements. Going into her bedroom, she reappeared in a few minutes with a light cloak thrown over her shoulders and a white-trimmed broad-brimmed hat. Then she rolled up the manuscript in a paper, and called her French maid. As she stood there awaiting her with the roll in her hand, she might have been some young girl on her way to her music lesson.

"If my brother returns before I do tell him to wait."

"Madame is going—"

"Out," said Mrs. Ashwood blithely, and tripped down stairs.

She made her way directly to the shore where she remembered there was a group of rocks affording a shelter from the north-west trade winds. It was reached at low water by a narrow ridge of sand, and here she had often basked in the sun with her book. It was here that she now unrolled John Milton's manuscript and read.

It was the story she had told him, but interpreted by his poetry and adorned by his fancy until the facts as she remembered them seemed to be no longer hers, or indeed truths at all. She had always believed her cousin's unhappy temperament to have been the result of a moral and physical idiosyncrasy—she found them here to be the effect of a lifelong and hopeless passion for herself! The ingenious John Milton had given a poet's precocity to the youth whom she had only known as a suspicious, moody boy, had idealised him as a sensitive but songless Byron, had given him the added infirmity of pulmonary weakness, and a handkerchief that in moments of great excitement, after having been hurriedly pressed to his pale lips, was withdrawn "with a crimson stain." Opposed to this interesting figure—the more striking to her as she had been hitherto haunted by the impression that her cousin during his boyhood had been subject to facial eruption and boils—was her own equally idealised self. Cruelly kind to her cousin and gentle with his weaknesses while calmly ignoring their cause, leading him unconsciously step by step in his fatal passion, he only became aware by accident that she nourished an ideal hero in the person of a hard, proud, middle-aged practical man of the world—her future husband! At this picture of the late Mr. Ashwood, who had really been an indistinctive social *bon vivant*, his amiable relict grew



somewhat hysterical. The discovery of her real feelings drove the consumptive cousin into a secret, self-imposed exile on the shores of the Pacific, where he hoped to find a grave. But the complete and sudden change of life and scene, the balm of the wild woods and the wholesome barbarism of nature, wrought a magical change in his physical health and a philosophical rest in his mind. He married the daughter of an Indian chief. Years passed, the heroine—a rich and still young and beautiful widow—unwittingly sought the same medicinal solitude. Here in the depth of the forest she encountered her former playmate; the passion which he had fondly supposed was dead, revived in her presence, and for the first time she learned from his bearded lips the secret of his passion. Alas! not *she* alone! The contiguous forest could not be bolted out, and the Indian wife heard all. Recognising the situation with aboriginal directness of purpose, she committed suicide in the fond belief that it would reunite the survivors. But in vain, the cousins parted on the spot to meet no more.

Even Mrs. Ashwood's predilection for the youthful writer could not overlook the fact that the *dénouement* was by no means novel nor the situation human, but yet it was here that she was most interested and fascinated. The description of the forest was a description of the wood where she had first met Harcourt; the charm of it returned, until she almost seemed to again inhale its balsamic freshness in the pages before her. Now, as then, her youth came back with the same longing and regret. But more bewildering than all, it was herself that moved there, painted with the loving hand of the narrator. For the first time she experienced the delicious flattery of seeing herself as only a lover could see her. The smallest detail of her costume was suggested with an accuracy that pleasantly thrilled her feminine sense. The grace of her figure slowly moving through

the shadow, the curves of her arm and the delicacy of her hand that held the bridle rein, the gentle glow of her softly rounded cheek, the sweet mystery of her veiled eyes and forehead, and the escaping gold of her lovely hair beneath her hat were all in turn masterfully touched or tenderly suggested. And when to this was added the faint perfume of her nearer presence—the scent she always used, the delicate revelations of her withdrawn gauntlet, the bracelet clasping her white wrist, and at last the thrilling contact of her soft hand on his arm—she put down the manuscript and blushed like a very girl. Then she started.

A shout!—*his* voice surely!—and the sound of oars in their rowlocks.

An instant revulsion of feeling overtook her. With a quick movement she instantly hid the manuscript beneath her cloak and stood up erect and indignant. Not twenty yards away, apparently advancing from the opposite shore of the bay, was a boat. It contained only John Milton resting on his oars and scanning the group of rocks anxiously. His face, which was quite strained with anxiety, suddenly flushed when he saw her, and then recognising the unmistakable significance of her look and attitude, paled once more. He bent over his oars again; a few strokes brought him close to the rock.

"I beg your pardon," he said hesitatingly, as he turned towards her and laid aside his oars, "but—I thought—you were—in danger."

She glanced quickly round her. She had forgotten the tide! The ledge between her and the shore was already a foot under brown sea-water. Yet if she had not thought that it would have looked ridiculous she would have leaped down even then and waded ashore.

"It's nothing," she said coldly, with the air of one to whom the situation was an everyday occurrence; "it's only a few steps and a slight wetting—and my brother would have been here in a moment more."

John Milton's frank eyes made no secret of his mortification. "I ought not to have disturbed you, I know," he said quickly; "I had no right. But I was on the other shore opposite and I saw you come down here—that is—"he blushed prodigiously—"I thought it *might* be you—and I ventured—I—mean—won't you let me row you ashore?"

There seemed to be no reasonable excuse for refusing. She slipped quickly into the boat without waiting for his helping hand, avoiding that contact which only a moment ago she was trying to recall.

A few strokes brought them ashore. He continued his explanation with the hopeless frankness and persistency of youth and inexperience. "I only came here the day before yesterday. I would not have come, but Mr. Fletcher, who has a cottage on the other shore, sent for me to offer me my old place on *The Clarion*. I had no idea of intruding upon your privacy by calling here without permission."

Mrs. Ashwood had resumed her conventional courtesy without however losing her feminine desire to make her companion pay for the agitation he had caused her. "We would have been always pleased to see you," she said vaguely, "and I hope, as you are here now, you will come with me to the hotel. My brother——"

But he still retained his hold of the boat-rope without moving, and continued, "I saw you yesterday, through the telescope, sitting in your balcony; and later at night I think it was your shadow I saw near the blue shaded lamp in the sitting-room by the window—I don't mean the red lamp that you have in your own room. I watched you until you put out the blue lamp and lit the red one. I tell you this—because—because—I thought you might be reading a manuscript I sent you. At least," he smiled faintly, "I *liked* to think it so."

In her present mood this struck her only as persistent and somewhat egotistical. But she felt herself now on

ground where she could deal firmly with him.

"Oh, yes," she said gravely. "I got it and thank you very much for it. I intended to write to you."

"Don't," he said, looking at her fixedly; "I can see you don't like it."

"On the contrary," she said promptly, "I think it beautifully written, and very ingenious in plot and situation. Of course it isn't the story I told you—I didn't expect that, for I'm not a genius. The man is not at all like my cousin, you know, and the woman—well, really to tell the truth, *she* is simply inconceivable!"

"You think so?" he said gravely. He had been gazing abstractedly at some shining brown sea-weed in the water and when he raised his eyes to hers they seemed to have caught its colour.

"Think so? I'm positive! There's no such a woman, she isn't *human*. But let us walk to the hotel."

"Thank you, but I must go back now."

"But at least let my brother thank you for taking his place—in rescuing me. It was so thoughtful in you to put off at once when you saw I was surrounded. I might have been in great danger."

"Please don't make fun of me, Mrs. Ashwood," he said with a faint return of his boyish smile. "You know there was no danger. I have only interrupted you in a nap or a reverie—and I can see now that you evidently came here to be alone."

Holding the manuscript more closely hidden under the folds of her cloak she smiled enigmatically. "I think I *did*, and it seems that the tide thought so too, and acted upon it. But you will come up to the hotel with me surely?"

"No, I am going back now." There was a sudden firmness about the young fellow which she had never before noticed. This was evidently the creature who had married in spite of his family.

"Won't you come back long enough

to take your manuscript? I will point out the part I refer to and—we will talk it over.”

“There is no necessity. I wrote to you that you might keep it; it is yours; it was written for you and none other. It is quite enough for me to know that you were good enough to read it. But will you do one thing more for me? Read it again! If you find anything in it the second time to change your views—if you find—”

“I will let you know,” she said quickly. “I will write to you as I intended.”

“No, I didn’t mean that. I meant that if you found the woman less inconceivable and more human, don’t write to me but put your red lamp in your window instead of the blue one. I will watch for it and see it.”

“I think I shall be able to explain myself much better with simple pen and ink,” she said drily, “and it will be much more useful to you.”

He lifted his hat gravely, shoved off the boat, leaped into it, and before she could hold out her hand was twenty feet away. She turned and ran quickly up the rocks. When she reached the hotel, she could see the boat already half across the bay.

Entering her sitting-room she found that her brother, tired of waiting for her, had driven out. Taking the hidden manuscript from her cloak she tossed it with a slight gesture of impatience on the table. Then she summoned the landlord.

“Is there a town across the bay?”

“No! the whole mountain-side belongs to Don Diego Fletcher. He lives away back in the coast range at Los Gatos, but he has a cottage and mill on the beach.”

“Don Diego Fletcher—Fletcher! Is he a Spaniard then?”

“Half and half I reckon; he’s from the lower country, I believe.”

“Is he here often?”

“Not much; he has mills at Los Gatos, wheat-ranches at Santa Clara, and owns a newspaper in ’Frisco! But he’s here now. There were lights in

his house last night, and his cutter lies off the point.”

“Could you get a small package and note to him?”

“Certainly; it is only a row across the bay.”

“Thank you.”

Without removing her hat and cloak she sat down at the table and began a letter to Don Diego Fletcher. She begged to enclose to him a manuscript which she was satisfied, for the interests of its author, was better in his hands than hers. It had been given to her by the author, Mr. J. M. Harcourt, whom she understood was engaged on Mr. Fletcher’s paper, *The Clarion*. In fact, it had been written at her suggestion, and from an incident in real life of which she was cognizant. She was sorry to say that on account of some very foolish criticism of her own as to the *facts*, the talented young author had become so dissatisfied with it as to make it possible that, if left to himself, this very charming and beautifully written story would remain unpublished. As an admirer of Mr. Harcourt’s genius, and a friend of his family, she felt that such an event would be deplorable, and she therefore begged to leave it to Mr. Fletcher’s delicacy and tact to arrange with the author for its publication. She knew that Mr. Fletcher had only to read it to be convinced of its remarkable literary merit, and she again would impress upon him the fact that her playful and thoughtless criticism—which was personal and confidential—was only based upon the circumstances that the author had really made a more beautiful and touching story than the poor facts which she had furnished seemed to warrant. She had only just learnt the fortunate circumstance that Mr. Fletcher was in the neighbourhood of the hotel where she was staying with her brother.

With the same practical, business-like directness, but perhaps a certain unbusiness-like haste superadded, she rolled up the manuscript and despatched it with the letter.

This done, however, a slight reaction set in, and having taken off her hat and shawl, she dropped listlessly on a chair by the window, but as suddenly rose and took a seat in the darker part of the room. She felt that she had done right—that highest but most depressing of human convictions! It was entirely for his good. There was no reason why his best interests should suffer for his folly. If anybody was to suffer it was she. But what nonsense was she thinking! She would write to him, later when she was a little cooler—as she had said. But then he had distinctly told her, and very rudely too, that he didn't want her to write. Wanted her to make *signals* to him—the idiot! and probably was even now watching her with a telescope. It was really too preposterous!

The result was that her brother found her on his return in a somewhat uncertain mood, and, as a counsellor, variable and conflicting in judgment. If this Clementina, who seemed to have the family qualities of obstinacy and audacity, really cared for him, she certainly wouldn't let delicacy stand in the way of letting him know it—and he was therefore safe to wait a little. A few moments later, she languidly declared that she was afraid that she was no counsellor in such matters; really she was getting too old to take any interest in that sort of thing, and she never had been a match-maker! By the way now, wasn't it odd that this neighbour, that rich capitalist across the bay, should be called Fletcher, and "James Fletcher" too, for Diego meant "James" in Spanish. Exactly the same name as poor Cousin Jim who disappeared. Did he remember her old playmate Jim? But her brother thought something else was a deuced sight more odd, namely, that this same Don Diego Fletcher was said to be very sweet on Clementina now, and was always in her company at the Ramirezes. And that, with this *Clarion* apology on the top of it, looked infernally queer.

Mrs. Ashwood felt a sudden consternation. Here had she—Jack's sister—just been taking Jack's probable rival into confidential correspondence! She turned upon Jack sharply:

"Why didn't you say that before?"

"I did tell you," he said gloomily, "but you didn't listen. But what difference does it make to you now?"

"None whatever," said Mrs. Ashwood calmly as she walked out of the room.

Nevertheless the afternoon passed wearily, and her usual ride into the upland cañon did not reanimate her. For reasons known best to herself she did not take her after dinner stroll along the shore to watch the outlying fog. At a comparatively early hour, while there was still a roseate glow in the western sky, she appeared with grim deliberation, and the blue lamp shade in her hand, and placed it over the lamp which she lit and stood on her table beside the window. This done she sat down and began to write with bright-eyed but vicious complacency.

"But you don't want that light *and* the window, Constance," said Jack wonderingly.

Mrs. Ashwood could not stand the dreadful twilight.

"But take away your lamp and you'll have light enough from the sunset," responded Jack.

That was just what she didn't want! The light from the window was that horrid vulgar red glow which she hated. It might be very romantic and suit lovers like Jack, but as *she* had some work to do, she wanted the blue shade of the lamp to correct that dreadful glare.

## CHAPTER XII.

JOHN MILTON had rowed back without lifting his eyes to Mrs. Ashwood's receding figure. He believed that he was right in declining her invitation, although he had a miserable feeling that it entailed seeing her for the last time. With all that he believed was his previous experience of the affections, he was still so untutored as to

be confused as to his reasons for declining, or his right to have been shocked and disappointed at her manner. It seemed to him sufficiently plain that he had offended the most perfect woman he had ever known without knowing more. The feeling he had for her was none the less powerful because, in his great simplicity, it was vague and unformulated. And it was a part of this strange simplicity that in his miserable loneliness his thoughts turned unconsciously to his dead wife for sympathy and consolation. Loo would have understood him!

Mr. Fletcher, who had received him on his arrival with singular effusiveness and cordiality, had put off their final arrangements until after dinner, on account of pressing business. It was therefore with some surprise that an hour before the time he was summoned to Fletcher's room. He was still more surprised to find him sitting at his desk from which a number of business papers and letters had been hurriedly thrust aside to make way for a manuscript. A single glance at it was enough to show the unhappy John Milton that it was the one he had sent to Mrs. Ashwood. The colour flushed to his cheek and he felt a mist before his eyes. His employer's face on the contrary was quite pale, and his eyes were fixed on Harcourt with a singular intensity. His voice too, although under great control, was hard and strange.

"Read that," he said, handing the young man a letter.

The colour again streamed into John Milton's face as he recognised the hand of Mrs. Ashwood, and remained there while he read it. When he put it down, however, he raised his frank eyes to Fletcher's and said with a certain dignity and manliness: "What she says is the truth, sir. But it is *I* who am alone at fault. This manuscript is merely *my* stupid idea of a very simple story she was once kind enough to tell me when we were talking of strange occurrences in

real life, which she thought I might sometime make use of in my work. I tried to embellish it, and failed. That's all. I will take it back—it was written only for her."

There was such an irresistible truthfulness and sincerity in his voice and manner, that any idea of complicity with the sender was dismissed from Fletcher's mind. As Harcourt, however, extended his hand for the manuscript Fletcher interfered.

"You forget that you gave it to her, and she has sent it to me. If *I* don't keep it, it can be returned to her only. Now may I ask who is this lady who takes such an interest in your literary career? Have you known her long? Is she a friend of your family?"

The slight sneer that accompanied his question restored the natural colour to the young man's face but kindled his eye ominously.

"No," he said briefly, "I met her accidentally about two months ago and as accidentally found out that she had taken an interest in one of the first things I ever wrote for your paper. She neither knew you nor me. It was then that she told me this story; she did not even then know who *I* was, though she had met some of my family. She was very good and has generously tried to help me."

Fletcher's eyes remained fixed upon him.

"But this tells me only *what* she is, not *who* she is."

"I am afraid you must inquire of her brother, Mr. Shipley," said Harcourt curtly.

"Shipley?"

"Yes; he is travelling with her for his health, and they are going south when the rains come. They are wealthy Philadelphians I believe, and—and she is a widow."

Fletcher picked up her note and glanced again at the signature, "Constance Ashwood." There was a moment of silence, when he resumed in quite a different voice: "It's odd I never met them nor they me."

As he seemed to be waiting for a

response, John Milton said simply: "I suppose it's because they have not been here long, and are somewhat reserved."

Mr. Fletcher laid aside the manuscript and letter, and took up his apparently suspended work.

"When you see this Mrs.—Mrs. Ashwood again, you might say——"

"I shall not see her again," interrupted John Milton, hastily.

Mr. Fletcher shrugged his shoulders. "Very well," he said with a peculiar smile, "I will write to her. Now, Mr. Harcourt," he continued with a sudden business brevity, "if you please, we'll drop this affair and attend to the matter for which I just summoned you. Since yesterday an important contract for which I have been waiting is concluded, and its performance will take me East at once. I have made arrangements that you will be left in the literary charge of *The Clarion*. It is only a fitting recompense that the paper owes to you and your father—to whom I hope to see you presently reconciled. But we won't discuss that now! As my affairs take me back to Los Gatos within half an hour, I am sorry I cannot dispense my hospitality in person,—but you will dine and sleep here to-night. Good-bye. As you go out will you please send up Mr. Jackson to me?" He nodded briefly, seemed to plunge instantly into his papers again, and John Milton was glad to withdraw.

The shock he had felt at Mrs. Ashwood's frigid disposition of his wishes and his manuscript had benumbed him to any enjoyment or appreciation of the change in his fortune. He wandered out of the house and descended to the beach in a dazed, bewildered way, seeing only the words of her letter to Fletcher before him, and striving to grasp some other meaning from them than their coldly practical purport. Perhaps this was her cruel revenge for his telling her not to write to him. Could she not have divined it was only his fear of what she might say! And now it was all

over! She had washed her hands of him with the sending of that manuscript and letter, and he would pass out of her memory as a foolish, conceited ingrate—perhaps a figure as wearily irritating and stupid to her as the cousin she had known. He mechanically lifted his eyes to the distant hotel: the glow was still in the western sky, but the blue lamp was already shining in the window. His cheek flushed quickly, and he turned away as if she could have seen his face. Yes—she despised him, and *that* was his answer!

When he returned, Mr. Fletcher had gone. He dragged through a dinner with Mr. Jackson, Fletcher's secretary, and tried to realise his good fortune in listening to the subordinate's congratulations. "But I thought," said Jackson, "you had slipped up on your luck to-day, when the old man sent for you. He was quite white and ready to rip out about something that had just come in. I suppose it was one of those anonymous things against your father—the old man's dead set against 'em now." But John Milton heard him vaguely, and presently excused himself for a row on the moonlit bay.

The active exertion, with intervals of placid drifting along the land-locked shore, somewhat soothed him. The heaving Pacific beyond was partly hidden in a low creeping fog, but the curving bay was softly radiant. The rocks whereon she sat that morning, the hotel where she was now quietly reading, were outlined in black and silver. In this dangerous contiguity it seemed to him that her presence returned—not the woman who had met him so coldly; who had penned those lines; the woman from whom he was now parting for ever, but the blameless ideal he had worshipped from the first, and which he now felt could never pass out of his life again! He recalled their long talks, their rarer rides and walks in the city; her quick appreciation and ready sympathy; her pretty curiosity and half-maternal consideration of his foolish youthful past; even



the playful way that she sometimes seemed to make herself younger as if to better understand him. Lingered at times in the shadow of the headland, he fancied he saw the delicate nervous outlines of her face near his own again ; the faint shading of her brown lashes, the soft intelligence of her grey eyes. Drifting idly in the placid moonlight, pulling feverishly across the swell of the channel, or lying on his oars in the shallows of the rocks, but always following the curves of the bay, like a bird circling around a lighthouse, it was far in the night before he at last dragged his boat upon the sand. Then he turned to look once more at her distant window. He would be away in the morning and he should never see it again ! It was very late, but the blue light seemed to be still burning unalterably and inflexibly.

But even as he gazed, a change came over it. A shadow seemed to pass before the blind ; the blue shade was lifted ; for an instant he could see the colourless star-like point of the light itself show clearly. It was over now : she was putting out the lamp. Suddenly he held his breath ! A roseate glow gradually suffused the window like a burning blush ; the curtain was drawn aside, and the red lamp shade gleamed out surely and steadily into the darkness.

Transfigured and breathless in the moonlight, John Milton gazed on it. It seemed to him the dawn of Love !

#### CHAPTER XIII.

THE winter rains had come. But so plenteously and persistently, and with such fateful preparation of circumstance, that the long-looked-for blessing presently became a wonder, an anxiety, and at last a slowly widening terror. Before a month had passed every mountain, stream, and watercourse, surcharged with the melted snows of the Sierras, had become a great tributary ; every tributary a great river, until, pouring their

great volume into the engorged channels of the American and Sacramento rivers, they overleaped their banks and became as one vast inland sea. Even to a country already familiar with broad and striking catastrophe, the flood was a phenomenal one. For days the sullen overflow lay in the valley of the Sacramento, enormous, silent, currentless—except where the surplus waters rolled through Carquinez Straits, San Francisco Bay, and the Golden Gate, and reappeared as the vanished Sacramento River, in an outflowing stream of fresh and turbid water fifty miles at sea.

Across the vast inland expanse, brooded over by a leaden sky, leaden rain fell, dimpling like shot the sluggish pools of the flood ; a cloudy chaos of fallen trees, drifting barns and outhouses, waggons and agricultural implements moved over the surface of the waters, or circled slowly around the outskirts of forests that stood ankle deep in ooze and the current which in serried phalanx they resisted still. As night fell these forms became still more vague and chaotic, and were interspersed with the scattered lanterns and flaming torches of relief-boats, or occasionally the high terraced gleaming windows of the great steamboats feeling their way along the lost channel. At times the opening of a furnace-door shot broad bars of light across the sluggish stream and into the branches of dripping and drift-encumbered trees ; at times the looming smoke-stacks sent out a pent-up breath of sparks that illuminated the inky chaos for a moment, and then fell as black and dripping rain. Or perhaps a hoarse shout from some faintly outlined bulk on either side brought a quick response from the relief-boats, and the detaching of a canoe with a blazing pine-knot in its bow into the outer darkness.

It was late in the afternoon when Lawrence Grant, from the deck of one of the larger tugs, sighted what had been once the estuary of Sidon Creek.

The leader of a party of scientific observation and relief he had kept a tireless watch of eighteen hours, keenly noticing the work of devastation, the changes in the channel, the prospects of abatement, and the danger that still threatened. He had passed down the length of the submerged Sacramento valley, through the Straits of Carquinez, and was now steaming along the shores of the upper reaches of San Francisco Bay. Everywhere the same scene of desolation—vast stretches of *tule* land, once broken up by cultivation and dotted with dwellings, now clearly erased on that watery chart; long lines of symmetrical perspective, breaking the monotonous level, showing orchards buried in the flood; Indian mounds and natural eminences covered with cattle or hastily erected camps; half submerged houses, whose solitary chimneys, however, still gave signs of an undaunted life within; isolated groups of trees, with their lower branches heavy with the unwholesome fruit of the flood, in wisps of hay and straw, rakes and pitchforks, or pathetically sheltering some shivering and forgotten household pet. But everywhere the same dull, expressionless, placid tranquillity of destruction—a horrible levelling of all things in one bland smiling equality of surface, beneath which agony, despair, and ruin were deeply buried and forgotten; a catastrophe without convulsion—a devastation voiceless, passionless, and supine.

The boat had slowed up before what seemed to be a collection of disarranged houses with the current flowing between lines that indicated the existence of thoroughfares and streets. Many of the lighter wooden buildings were huddled together on the street corners with their gables to the flow; some appeared as if they had fallen on their knees, and others lay complacently on their sides, like the houses of a child's toy village. An elevator still lifted itself above the other warehouses; from the centre of an enormous square pond, once the *plaza*, still

arose a "Liberty pole," or flagstaff, which now supported a swinging lantern, and in the distance appeared the glittering dome of some public building. Grant recognised the scene at once. It was all that was left of the invincible youth of Tasajara!

As this was an objective point of the scheme of survey and relief for the district, the boat was made fast to the second story of one of the warehouses. It was now used as a general store and depôt, and bore a singular resemblance in its interior to Harcourt's grocery at Sidon. This suggestion was the more fatefully indicated by the fact that half-a-dozen men were seated around a stove in the centre, more or less given up to a kind of philosophical and lazy enjoyment of their enforced idleness. And when to this was added the more surprising coincidence that the party consisted of Billings, Peters, and Wingate,—former residents of Sidon and first citizens of Tasajara—the resemblance was complete.

They were ruined,—but they accepted their common fate with a certain Indian stoicism and Western sense of humour that for the time lifted them above the vulgar complacency of their former fortunes. There was a deep-seated, if coarse and irreverent, resignation in their philosophy. At the beginning of the calamity it had been roughly formulated by Billings in the statement that "it wasn't anybody's fault; there was nobody to kill, and what couldn't be reached by a Vigilance Committee there was no use resolootin' over." When the Reverend Doctor Pilsbury had suggested an appeal to a Higher Power, Peters had replied good-humouredly, that a "Creator who could fool around with them in that style was above being interfered with by prayer." At first the calamity had been a thing to fight against; then it became a practical joke, the sting of which was lost in the victims' power of endurance and assumed ignorance of its purport. There was something almost pathetic in their attempts to understand its peculiar humour.

"How about that Europe-an trip o' yours, Peters?" said Billings meditatively, from the depths of his chair. "Looks as if those Crowned Heads over there would have to wait till the water goes down considerable afore you kin trot out your wife and darters before 'em!"

"Yes," said Peters, "it rather pints that way; and ez far ez I kin see, Mame Billings ain't goin' to no Saratoga, neither, this year."

"Reckon the boys won't hang about old Harcourt's Free Library to see the girls home from lectures and singing-class much this year," said Wingate. "Wonder if Harcourt ever thought o' this the day he opened it, and made that rattlin' speech o' his about the new property? Clark says everything built on that made ground has got to go after the water falls. Rough on Harcourt after all his other losses, eh? He oughter have closed up with that scientific chap, Grant, and married him to Clementina while the big boom was on——"

"Hush!" said Peters, indicating Grant, who had just entered quietly.

"Don't mind me, gentlemen," said Grant, stepping towards the group with a grave but perfectly collected face; "on the contrary, I am very anxious to hear all the news of Harcourt's family. I left for New York before the rainy season, and have only just got back."

His speech and manner appeared to be so much in keeping with the prevailing grim philosophy that Billings, after a glance at the others, went on. "Ef you left afore the first rains," said he, "you must have left only the steamer ahead of Fletcher when he run off with Clementina Harcourt, and you might have come across them on their wedding-trip in New York."

Not a muscle of Grant's face changed under their eager and cruel scrutiny. "No, I didn't," he returned quietly. "But why did she run away? Did the father object to Fletcher? If I

remember rightly he was rich and a good match."

"Yes, but I reckon the old man hadn't quite got over *The Clarion* abuse for all its eating humble pie and taking back its yarns of him. And maybe he might have thought the engagement rather sudden. They say that she'd only met Fletcher the day afore the engagement."

"That be d——d," said Peters, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and startling the lazy resignation of his neighbours by taking his feet from the stove and sitting upright. "I tell ye, gentlemen, I'm sick o' this sort o' hog-wash that's been ladled round to us. That gal Clementina Harcourt and that feller Fletcher had met not only once, but *many* times afore——yes! they were old friends if it comes to that, a matter of six years ago."

Grant's eyes were fixed eagerly on the speaker, although the others scarcely turned their heads.

"You know, gentlemen," said Peters, "I never took stock in this yer story of the drownin' of Lige Curtis. Why? Well, if you wanter know—in my opinion—there never was any Lige Curtis!"

Billings lifted his head with difficulty; Wingate turned his face to the speaker.

"There never was a scrap o' paper ever found in his cabin with the name o' Lige Curtis on it; there never was any inquiry made for Lige Curtis; there never was any sorrowin' friends comin' after Lige Curtis. For why?—There never was any Lige Curtis. The man who passed himself off in Sidon under that name—was that man Fletcher. That's how he knew all about Harcourt's title; that's how he got his best holt on Harcourt. And he did it all to get Clementina Harcourt, whom the old man had refused to him in Sidon."

A grunt of incredulity passed around the circle. Such is the fate of historical innovation! Only Grant listened attentively.

"Ye ought to tell that yarn to John Milton," said Wingate ironically; "it's about in the style o' them stories he slings in *The Clarion*."

"He'z made a good thing out of that job. Wonder what he gets for them?" said Peters.

It was Billings' time to rise, and, under the influence of some strong cynical emotion, to even rise to his feet. "Gets for 'em!—*gets* for 'em! I'll tell you *what* he gets for 'em! It beats this story o' Peters'—it beats the flood. It beats me! Ye know that boy, gentlemen; ye know how he uster lie round his father's store, reading flapdoodle stories and sich? Ye remember how I uster try to give him good examples and knock some sense into him? Ye remember how, after his father's good luck, he spiled all his own chances, and ran off with his father's waiter gal—all on account o' them flapdoodle books he read? Ye remember how he sashayed round newspaper offices in Frisco until

he could write a flapdoodle story himself? Ye wanter know what he gets for 'em? I'll tell you. He got an interdution to one of them high-toned, high-falutin' 'don't-touch-me' rich widders from Philadelfy—that's what he gets for 'em. He got her dead-set on him and his stories—that's what he gets for 'em! He got her to put him up with Fletcher in *The Clarion*—that's what he gets for 'em. And darn my skin!—ef what they say is true, while we hard-working men are sittin' here like drowned rats—that air John Milton, ez never did a stitch o' live work like me 'n' yere; ez never did anythin' but spin yarns about *us* ez did work, is now 'gittin' for 'em,—what? Guess! Why, he's gittin' *the rich widder herself* and *half a million dollars with her*! Gentlemen! lib'ty is a good thing—but thar's some things ye gets too much lib'ty of in this county—and that's this yer Lib'ty of THE PRESS!

THE END.

## WILLIAM COBBETT.

To acquaint oneself properly with the works of Cobbett is no child's play. It requires some money, a great deal of time, still more patience, and a certain freedom from superfineness. For as few of his books have recently been reprinted, and as they were all very popular when they appeared, it is frequently necessary to put up with copies exhibiting the marks of that popularity in a form with which Coleridge and Lamb professed to be delighted, but to which I own that I am churl enough to prefer the clean, fresh leaves of even the most modern reprint. And the total is huge; for Cobbett's industry and facility of work were both appalling, and while his good work is constantly disfigured by rubbish, there is hardly a single parcel of his rubbish in which there is not good work. Of the seventy-four articles which compose his bibliography, some of the most portentous, such as the *State Trials* (afterwards known as Howell's) and the *Parliamentary Debates* (afterwards known as Hansard's), may be disregarded as simple compilation; and it is scarcely necessary for any one to read the thirty years of *The Register* through, seeing that almost everything in it that is most characteristic reappeared in other forms. But this leaves a formidable total. The *Works of Peter Porcupine*, in which most of Cobbett's writings earlier than this century and a few later are collected, fill twelve volumes of fair size. The only other collection, the *Political Works*, made up by his sons after his death from *The Register* and other sources, is in six volumes, none of which contains less than five hundred, while one contains more than eight hundred large pages, so closely printed that each represents two if not three of the usual library octavo.

The *Rural Rides* fill two stout volumes in the last edition; besides which there are before me literally dozens of mostly rather grubby volumes of every size from Tull's *Husbandry*, in a portly octavo, to the *Legacy to Labourers*, about as big as a lady's card-case. If a man be virtuous enough, or rash enough, to stray further into anti-Cobbett pamphlets (of which I once bought an extremely grimy bundle for a sovereign) he may go on in that path almost for ever. And I see no rest for the sole of his foot till he has read through the whole of "the bloody old *Times*" or "that foolish drab Anna Brodie's rubbish," as Cobbett used with indifferent geniality to call that newspaper,—the last elegant description being solely due to the fact that he had become aware that a poor lady of the name was a shareholder.

Let it be added that this vast mass is devoted almost impartially to as vast a number of subjects, that it displays throughout the queerest and (till you are well acquainted with it) the most incredible mixture of sense and nonsense, folly and wit, ignorance and knowledge, good temper and bad blood, sheer egotism and sincere desire to benefit the country. Cobbett will write upon politics and upon economics, upon history ecclesiastical and civil, upon grammar, cookery, gardening, woodcraft, standing armies, population, ice-houses, and almost every other conceivable subject, with the same undoubting confidence that he is and must be right. In what plain men still call inconsistency there never was his equal. He was approaching middle life when he was still writing cheerful pamphlets and tracts with such titles as *The Bloody Buoy*, *The Cannibal's Progress*, and so on, destined to hold up the

French Revolution to the horror of mankind; he had not passed middle life when he discovered that the said Revolution was only a natural and necessary consequence of the same system of taxation which was grinding down England. He denied stoutly that he was anything but a friend to monarchical government, and asseverated a thousand times over that he had not the slightest wish to deprive landlords or any one else of their property. Yet for the last twenty years of his life he was constantly holding up the happy state of those republicans the profligacy, injustice, and tyranny of whose government he had earlier denounced. He sometimes came near, if he did not openly avow, the "hold-the-harvest" doctrine; and he deliberately proposed that the national creditor should be defrauded of his interest, and therefore practically of his capital. A very shrewd man naturally, and by no means an ill-informed one in some ways, there was no assertion too wildly contradictory of facts, no assumption too flagrantly opposed to common sense, for him to make when he had an argument to further or a craze to support. "My opinion is," says he very gravely, "that Lincolnshire alone contains more of those fine buildings [churches] than the whole continent of Europe." The churches of Lincolnshire are certainly fine; but imagine all the churches of even the western continent of Europe, from the abbey of Batalha to Cologne Cathedral, and from Santa Rosalia to the Folgoët, crammed and crouching under the shadow of Boston Stump! He "dare say that Ely probably contained from fifty to a hundred thousand people" at a time when it is rather improbable that London contained the larger number of the two. Only mention Jews, Scotchmen, the National Debt, the standing army, pensions, poetry, tea, potatoes, larch trees, and a great many other things, and Cobbett becomes a mere, though a very amusing, maniac. Let him meet in one of his peregrinations, or merely

remember in the course of a book or article, some magistrate who gave a decision unfavourable to him twenty years before, some lawyer who took a side against him, some journalist who opposed his pamphlets, and a torrent of half humorous but wholly vindictive Billingsgate follows; while if the luckless one has lost his estate, or in any way come to misfortune meanwhile, Cobbett will jeer and whoop and triumph over him like an Indian squaw over a hostile brave at the stake. Mixed with all this you shall find such plain shrewd common sense, such an incomparable power of clear exposition of any subject that the writer himself understands, such homely but genuine humour, such untiring energy, and such a hearty desire for the comfort of everybody who is not a Jew or a jobber or a tax-eater, as few public writers have ever displayed. And (which is the most important thing for us) you shall also find sense and nonsense alike, rancorous and mischievous diatribes as well as sober discourses, politics as well as trade-puffery (for Cobbett puffed his own wares unblushingly), all set forth in such a style as not more than two other Englishmen, whose names are Defoe and Bunyan, can equal.

Like theirs it is a style wholly natural and unstudied. It is often said, and he himself confesses, that as a young man he gave his days and nights to the reading of Swift. But except in the absence of adornment, and the uncompromising plainness of speech, there is really very little resemblance between them, and what there is is chiefly due to Cobbett's following of the *Drapier's Letters*, where Swift, admirable as he is, is clearly using a falsetto. For one thing, the main characteristic of Swift—the perpetual, unforced, unflagging irony which is the blood and the life of his style—is utterly absent from Cobbett. On the other hand, if Cobbett imitated little, he was imitated much. Although his accounts of the circulation of his works are doubtless exaggerated



as he exaggerated everything connected with himself, it was certainly very large; and though they were no doubt less read by the literary than by the non-literary class, they have left traces everywhere. As a whole Cobbett is not imitable; the very reasons which gave him the style forbade another to borrow it. But certain tricks of his reappear in places both likely and unlikely; and since I have been thoroughly acquainted with him I think I can see the ancestry of some of the mannerisms of two writers whose filiation had hitherto puzzled me—Peacock and Borrow. In the latter case there is no doubt whatever; indeed the kinship between Borrow and Cobbett is very strong in many ways. Even in the former I do not think there is much doubt, though Peacock's thorough scholarship and Cobbett's boisterous unscholarliness make it one of thought rather than of form, and of a small part of thought only.

He has left an agreeable and often quoted account of his own early life in an autobiographic fragment written to confound his enemies in America. He was born on March 9th, 1762,<sup>1</sup> at Farnham; and the chief of his interests during his life centred round the counties of Hampshire and Surrey, with Berkshire and Wiltshire thrown in as benefiting by neighbourhood. His father was a small farmer, not quite uneducated, but not much in means or rank above a labourer, and all the family were brought up to work hard. After some unimportant vicissitudes, William ran away to London and, attempting quill-driving in an attorney's office for a time, soon got tired of it and enlisted in a marching regiment which was sent to Nova Scotia. This was in the spring of 1784. As he was steady, intelligent, and not uneducated, he very soon rose from the ranks, and was sergeant-

major for some years. During his service with the colours he made acquaintance with his future wife (a gunner's daughter of the literal and amiable kind), and with Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The regiment came home in 1792, and Cobbett got his discharge, married his beloved, and went to France. Unfortunately he had other reasons besides love and a desire to learn French for quitting British shores. He had discovered, or imagined, that some of his officers were guilty of malversation of regimental money: he abused his position as sergeant-major to take secret copies of regimental documents; and when he had got his discharge he lodged his accusation. A court-martial was granted. When it met, however, there was no accuser, for Cobbett had gone to France. Long afterwards, when the facts were cast up against him, he attempted a defence. The matter is one of considerable intricacies and of no great moment. Against Cobbett it may be said to be one of the facts which prove (what indeed hardly needs proving), that he was not a man of any chivalrous delicacy of feeling, and did not see that in no circumstances can it be justifiable to bring accusations of disgraceful conduct against others and then run away. In his favour it may be said that, though not a very young man, he was not in the least a man of the world, and was no doubt sincerely surprised and horrified to find that his complaint was not to be judged off-hand and Cadi-fashion, but with all sorts of cumbrous and expensive forms.

However this may be, he went off with his wife and his savings to France; and enjoyed himself there for some months, tackling diligently to French the while, until the Revolution (it was, let it be remembered, in 1792) made the country too hot for him. He determined to go to Philadelphia, where, and elsewhere in the United States, he passed the next seven years. They were seven years of a very lively

<sup>1</sup> Cobbett himself says 1766, and the dates in the fragment are all adjusted to this; but biography says 1762.

character ; for it was the nature of Cobbett to find quarrels, and he found plenty of them here. Some accounts of his exploits in offence and defence may be found in the biographies, fuller ones in the books of the chronicles of Peter Porcupine, his *nom de guerre* in pamphleteering and journalism. Cobbett was at this time, despite his transactions with the Judge Advocate General, his flight and his selection of France and America for sojourn, a red-hot Tory and a true Briton, and he engaged in a violent controversy, or series of controversies, with the pro-Gallic and anti-English party in the States. The works of Peter, besides the above-quoted *Bloody Buoy* and *Cannibal's Progress*, contain in their five thousand pages or thereabouts, other cheerfully named documents, such as, *A Bone to Gnaw for the Democrats*, *A Kick for a Bite*, *The Diplomatic Blunderbuss*, *The American Rushlight*, and so on. This last had mainly to do with a non-political quarrel into which Cobbett got with a certain quack doctor named Rush. Rush got Cobbett cast in heavy damages for libel ; and though these were paid by subscription, the affair seems to have disgusted our pamphleteer and he sailed for England on June 1st, 1800.

There can be little doubt, though Cobbett's own bragging and the bickering of his biographers have rather darkened than illuminated the matter, that he came home with pretty definite and very fair prospects of Government patronage. More than one of his Anti-Jacobin pamphlets had been reprinted for English consumption. He had already arranged for the London edition of *Porcupine's Works* which appeared subsequently ; and he had attracted attention not merely from literary understrappers of Government but from men like Windham. Very soon after his return Windham asked him to dinner, to meet not merely Canning, Ellis, Frere, Malone and others, but Pitt himself. The publication of the host's diary long

afterwards clearly established the fact, which had been rather idly contested or doubted by some commentators. How or why Cobbett fell away from Pitt's party is not exactly known, and is easier to understand than to definitely explain ; even when he left it is not certain. He was offered, he says, a Government paper, or even two ; but he refused and published his own *Porcupine*, which lasted for some time till it lapsed (with intermediate stages) into the famous *Weekly Register*. In both, and in their intermediates for some three or four years at least, the general policy of the Government, and especially the war with France, was stoutly supported. But Cobbett was a free-lance born and bred, and he never during the whole of his life succeeded in working under any other command than his own, or with any one on equal terms. He got into trouble before very long owing to some letters, signed *Juvena*, on the Irish executive ; and though his contributor (one Johnson, afterwards a judge), gave himself up, and Cobbett escaped the fines which had been imposed on him, his susceptible vanity had no doubt been touched. It was also beyond doubt a disgust to his self-educated mind to find himself regarded as an inferior by the regularly trained wits and scholars of the Government press ; and I should be afraid that he was annoyed at Pitt's taking no notice of him. But, to do Cobbett justice, there were other and nobler reasons for his revolt. His ideal of politics and economics (of which more presently), though an impossible one, was sincere and not ungenerous ; and he could not but perceive that a dozen years of war had made its contrast with the actual state of the British farmer and labourer more glaring than ever. The influence which he soon wielded, and the profit which he derived through the *Register*, at once puffed him up and legitimately encouraged the development of his views. He bought, or rather (a sad thing for such a denouncer of "paper"), ob-

tained, subject to heavy mortgages, a considerable estate of several farms at and near Botley in Hampshire. Here for some five years (1805 to 1809), he lived the life of a very substantial yeoman, almost a squire, entertaining freely, farming, coursing, encouraging boxing and single-stick, fishing with drag-nets, and editing the *Register* partly in person and partly by deputy. Of these deputies, the chief were his partner, and afterwards foe, the printer Wright, and Howell of the *State Trials*. This latter, being unluckily a gentleman and a university man, comes in for one of Cobbett's characteristic flings as "one of your college gentlemen," who "have and always will have the insolence to think themselves our betters; and our superior talents, industry and weight only excite their envy." Prosperity is rarely good for an Englishman of Cobbett's stamp, and he seems at this time to have decidedly lost his head. He had long been a pronounced Radical, thundering or guffawing in the *Register* at pensions, sinecures, the debt, paper-money, the game-laws (though he preserved himself), and so forth; and the authorities naturally enough only waited for an opportunity of explaining to him that immortal maxim which directs the expectations of those who play at this kind of bowls. In July, 1809, he let them in by an article of the most violent character on the suppression of a mutiny among the Ely Militia. This had been put down, and the ring-leaders flogged by some cavalry of the German Legion; and Cobbett took advantage of this to beat John Bull's drum furiously. It has been the custom to turn up the whites of the eyes at Lord Ellenborough who tried the case, and Sir Vicary Gibbs who prosecuted; but I do not think that any sane man, remembering what the importance of discipline in the army was in 1809, can find fault with the jury who, and not Ellenborough or Gibbs, had to settle the matter, and who found Cobbett guilty. The sentence

no doubt was severe,—as such sentences in such cases were then wont to be—two years in Newgate. The judge, in imposing a fine of a thousand pounds, and security in the same amount for seven years to come, may be thought to have looked before and after as well as at the present. But the *Register* was not stopped, and Cobbett was allowed to continue in it without hindrance a polemic which was not likely to grow milder. For he never forgot or forgave an injury to his interests, or an insult to his vanity; and he was now becoming, quite honestly and disinterestedly, more and more of a fanatic on divers points, both of economics and of politics proper.

I cannot myself attach much importance to the undoubted fact that after the trial, which happened in June, 1810, but before judgment, Cobbett, aghast for a moment at the apparent ruin impending, made (as he certainly did make) some overtures of surrender and discontinuance of the *Register*. Such a course in a man with a large family and no means of supporting it but his pen, would have been, if not heroic, not disgraceful. But the negotiation somehow fell through. Unluckily for Cobbett, he on two subsequent occasions practically denied that he had ever made any offer at all; and the truth only came out when he and Wright quarrelled, nearly a dozen years later. This, the affair of the court-martial, and another to be mentioned shortly, are the only blots on his conduct as a man that I know, and in such an Ishmael as he was they are not very fatal.

He devoted the greater part of his time, during the easy, though rather costly, imprisonment of those days, to his *Paper against Gold*, in which, with next to no knowledge of the subject, he attacked probably the thorniest of all subjects, that of the currency; and the *Register* went on. He came out of Newgate in July, 1812, naturally in no very amiable temper. A mixture of private and public griefs almost immediately brought him into collision

with the authorities of the Church. He had long been at loggerheads with those of the State; and it was now more than ever that he became the advocate (and the most popular advocate it had) of Parliamentary Reform. He was, however, pretty quiet for three or four years, but at the end of that time, in September, 1816, he acted on a suggestion of Lord Cochrane's, cheapened the *Register* from one shilling to two-pence, and opened the new series with one of his best pamphlet addresses, "To the Journeymen and Labourers of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland." For a time he was very much in the mouths of men; but Ministers were not idle, and prepared for him a state of things still hotter than he had experienced before. Cobbett did not give it time to heat itself specially for him. He turned his eyes once more to America, and, very much to the general surprise, suddenly left Liverpool on March 22nd, 1817, arriving in May at New York, whence he proceeded to Long Island, and established himself on a farm there. Unluckily there were other reasons for his flight besides political ones. His affairs had become much muddled during his imprisonment, and had not mended since; and though his assets were considerable they were of a kind not easy to realise. There seems no doubt that Cobbett was generally thought to have run away from a gaol in more senses than one, and that the thought did him no good.

But he was an impossible person to put down; even his own mistakes, which were pretty considerable, could not do it. His flight, as it was called, gave handles to his enemies, and not least to certain former friends, including such very different persons as Orator Hunt and Sir Francis Burdett; it caused a certain belatedness, and, for a time, a certain intermittency, in his contributions to the *Register*; it confirmed him in his financial crazes, and it may possibly have supported him in a sort of private repudiation of his own debts, which he executed even

before becoming legally a bankrupt. Finally it led him to the most foolish act of his life, the lugging of Tom Paine's bones back to a country which, though not prosperous, could at any rate provide itself with better manure than that. In this famous absurdity the purely silly side of Cobbett's character comes out. For some time after he returned he was at low water both in finances and in popularity; while such political sanity as he ever possessed may be said to have wholly vanished. Yet, oddly enough, or not oddly, the transplanting and the re-transplanting seem to have had a refreshing effect on his literary production. He never indeed again produced anything so vigorous as the best of his earlier political works, but in non-political and mixed styles he even improved; and though he is occasionally more extravagant than ever in substance, there is a certain mellowness of form which is very remarkable. He was not far short of sixty when he returned in 1819; but the space of his life subsequent to his flight yielded the *Year's Residence in America*, the *English Grammar*, the *Twelve Sermons*, the *Cottage Economy*, the *English* (altered from a previous *American*) *Gardener*, the *History of the Reformation*, the *Woodlands*, *Cobbett's Corn*, the *Advice to Young Men*, and a dozen other works original or compiled, besides the *Rural Rides* and his other contributions to the *Register*.

He could not have lived at Botley any longer if he would, for the place was mortgaged up to the eyes. But to live in a town was abhorrent to him; and he had in America rather increased than satisfied his old fancy for rural occupations. So he set up house at Kensington, where he used a large garden (soon supplemented by more land at Barnes, and in his very last years by a place near Ash in his native district) as a kind of seed farm, selling the produce at the same shop with his *Registers*. He also utilized his now frequent rural rides, partly as commercial travelling for the diffusion of locust-trees, swede turnip

seed, and Cobbett's corn—a peculiar kind of maize, the virtues of which he vaunted loudly.

Also he began to think seriously of sitting in Parliament. At the general election after George the Third's death he contested Coventry, but without even coming near success. Soon afterwards he had an opportunity of increasing his general popularity—which, owing to his flight, his repudiation, and the foolery about Paine's bones, had sunk very low—by vigorously taking Queen Caroline's side. But he was not more fortunate in his next Parliamentary attempt at Preston, in 1826. Preston, even before the Reform Bill, was, though the Stanley influence was strong, a comparatively open borough, and had a large electorate; but it would not have Cobbett, nor was he ever successful till after the Bill passed. Before its passing the very Whig Government which had charge of it was obliged to pull him up. If he had been treated with undeserved severity before he was extremely fortunate now, though his rage against his unsuccessful Whig prosecutors was, naturally enough, much fiercer than it had been against his old Tory enemies. I do not think that any fair-minded person who reads the papers in the *Register*, and the cheaper and therefore more mischievous *Two-penny Trash*, devoted to the subject of "Swing," can fail to see that under a thin cloak of denunciation and dissuasion their real purport is "Don't put him under the pump," varied and set off by suggestions how extremely easy it would be to put him under the pump, and how improbable detection or punishment. And nobody, further, who reads the accounts of the famous Bristol riots can fail to see how much Cobbett (who had been in Bristol just before in full cry against "Tax-Eaters" and "Tithe-Eaters") had to do with them. It was probably lucky for him that he was tried before instead of after the Bristol matter, and even as it was he was not acquitted; the jury disagreed. After the Bill, his election somewhere was a certainty,

and he sat for Oldham till his death. Except a little foolery at first, and at intervals afterwards, he was inoffensive enough in the House. Nor did he survive his inclusion in that Collective Wisdom at which he had so often laughed many years, but died on June 19th, 1835, at the age of seventy-three. If medical opinion is right the Collective Wisdom had the last laugh; for its late hours and confinement seemed to have more to do with his death than any disease.

I have said that it is of great importance to get if possible a preliminary idea of Cobbett's general views on politics. This not only adds to the understanding of his work, but prevents perpetual surprise and possible fretting at his individual flings and crazes. To do him justice there was from first to last very little change in his own political ideal; though there was the greatest possible change in his views of systems, governments, and individuals in their relations to that ideal and to his own private interests or vanities. In this latter respect Cobbett was very human indeed. The son of a farmer-labourer, and himself passionately interested in agricultural pursuits, he may be said never, from the day he first took to politics to the day of his death, to have really and directly considered the welfare of any other class than the classes occupied with tilling or holding land. In one place he frantically applauds a real or supposed project of King Ferdinand of Spain for taxing every commercial person who sold, or bought to sell again, goods not of his own production or manufacture. If he to a certain extent tolerated manufactures, other than those carried on at home for immediate use, it was grudgingly, and indeed inconsistently with his general scheme. He frequently protests against the substitution of the shop for the fair or market; and so jealous is he of things passing otherwise than by actual delivery in exchange for actual coin or payment in kind, that he grumbles at one market



(I think Devizes) because the corn is sold by sample and not pitched in bulk on the market-floor. It is evident that if he possibly could have it, he would have a society purely agricultural, men making what things the earth does not directly produce as much as possible for themselves in their own houses during the intervals of field-labour. He quarrels with none of the three orders,—labourer, farmer, and landowner—as such; he does not want “the land for the people,” or the landlord’s rent for the farmer. Nor does he want any of the lower class to live in even mitigated idleness. Eight hours’ days have no place in Cobbett’s scheme; still less relief of children from labour for the sake of education. Everybody in the labouring class, women and children included, is to work and work pretty hard; while the landlord may have as much sport as ever he likes provided he allows a certain share to his tenant at times. But the labourer and his family are to have “full bellies” (it would be harsh but not entirely unjust to say that the full belly is the beginning and end of Cobbett’s theory), plenty of good beer, warm clothes, staunch and comfortably furnished houses. And that they may have these things they must have good wages; though Cobbett does not at all object to the truck or even the “Tommy” system. He seems to have, like a half socialist as he is, no affection for saving, and he once, with rather disastrous consequences, took to paying his own farm-labourers entirely in kind. In the same way the farmer is to have full stack-yards, a snug farm-house, with orchards and gardens thoroughly plensished. But he must not drink wine or tea, and his daughters must work and not play the piano. Squires there may be of all sorts, from the substantial yeoman to the lord (Cobbett has no objection to lords), and they may, I think, meet in some way or other to counsel the king (for Cobbett has no objection to kings). There is to be a militia for the defence of the country, and there

might be an Established Church provided that the tithes were largely, if not wholly, devoted to the relief of the poor and the exercise of hospitality. Everybody, provided he works, is to marry the prettiest girl he can find (Cobbett had a most generous weakness for pretty girls) as early as possible and have any number of children. But though there is to be plenty of game, there are to be no game-laws. There is to be no standing army, though there may be a navy. †There is to be no, or the very smallest, civil service. It stands to reason that there is to be no public debt; and the taxes are to be as low and as uniform as possible. Commerce, even on the direct scale, if that scale be large, is to be discouraged, and any kind of middleman absolutely exterminated. There is to be no poetry (Cobbett does sometimes quote Pope, but always with a gibe), no general literature (for though Cobbett’s own works are excellent, and indeed indispensable, that is chiefly because of the corruptions of the times), no fine arts—though Cobbett has a certain weakness for church architecture, mainly for a reason presently to be explained. Above all there is to be no such thing as what is called abroad a *rentier*. No one is to “live on his means,” unless these means come directly from the owning or the tilling of land. The harmless fund-holder with his three or four hundred a year, the government-clerk, the half-pay officer, are as abhorrent to Cobbett as the pensioner for nothing and the sinecurist. This is the state of things which he loves, and it is because the actual state of things is so different, and for no other reason, that he is a Radical Reformer.

I need not say that no such connected picture as I have endeavoured to draw will be found in any part of Cobbett’s works.<sup>1</sup> The strokes which compose it are taken from a thousand

<sup>1</sup> The nearest approach is in the *Manchester Lectures* of 1831; but this is not so much a project of an ideal State as a scheme for reforming the actual.



different places and filled in to a certain extent by guess work. But I am sure it is faithful to what he would have drawn himself if he had been given to imaginative construction. It will be seen at once that it is a sort of parallel in drab homespun, a more practical double (if the adjective may be used of two impracticable things), of Mr. William Morris's agreeable dreams. The art tobacco-pouches, and the museums, the young men hanging about off Biffin's to give any one a free row on the river, and so forth, were not in Cobbett's way. But the canvas, and even the main composition of the picture, is the same. Of course the ideal State never existed anywhere, and never could continue to exist long if it were set up in full working order to-morrow. Labourer A. would produce too many children, work too few hours, and stick too close to the ale-pot; farmer B. would be ruined by a bad year or a murrain; squire C. would outrun the non-existent constable and find a Jew to help him, even if Cobbett made an exception to his hatred of placemen for the sake of a Crown toothdrawer. One of the tradesmen who were permitted on sufferance to supply the brass kettles and the grandfathers' clocks which Cobbett loves would produce better goods and take better care of the proceeds than another, with the result of a better business and hoarded wealth. In short men would be men, and the world the world, in spite of Cobbett and Mr. Morris alike.

I doubt whether Cobbett, who knew something of history, ever succeeded in deceiving himself, great as were his powers that way, into believing that this state ever had existed. He would have no doubt gone into a paroxysm of rage and have called me as bad names as it was in his heart to apply to any Hampshire man, if I had suggested that such an approach to it as existed in his beloved fifteenth century was due to the Black Death, the French wars and those of the Roses. But the fair vision ever fled before him day

and night, and made him more and more furious with the actual state of England,—which was no doubt bad enough. The labourers with their eight or ten shillings a week and their Banyan diet, the farmers getting half-price for their ewes and their barley, the squires ousted by Jews and jobbers, filled his soul with a certainly not ignoble rage, only tempered by a sort of exultation to think in the last case that the fools had brought their ruin on their own heads by truckling to "the Thing." "The Thing" was the whole actual social and political state of England; and on everything and everybody that had brought "the Thing" about he poured impartial vitriol. The war which had run up the debt and increased the tax-eaters at the same time; the boroughmongers who had countenanced the war; the Jews and jobbers that negotiated and dealt in the loans; the parsons that ate the tithes; the lawyers that did government work,—Cobbett thundered against them all. But his wrath also descended upon far different, and one would have thought sufficiently guiltless, things and persons. The potato, the "soul-destroying root" so easy to grow (Cobbett did not live to see the potato famine or I fear he would have been rather hideous in his joy) so innutritious, so exclusive of sound beef and bread, has worse language than even a stock-jobber or a sinecurist. Tea, the expeller of beer, the pamperer of foreign commerce, the waster of the time of farmers' wives, is nearly as bad as the potato. I could not within any possible or probable space accorded me here follow out a tithe or a hundredth part of the strange ramifications and divagations of Cobbett's grand economic craze. The most comical branch perhaps is his patronage of the Roman Catholic Church, and the most comical twig of that branch his firm belief that the abundance and size of English churches testify to an infinitely larger population in England of old than at the present day. His rage at the impu-

dent Scotchman who put the population at two millions when he is sure it was twenty, and the earnestness with which he proves that a certain Wiltshire vale having so many churches capable of containing so many people must have once had so many score thousand inhabitants, are about equally amusing. That in the days which he praises much, and in which these churches were built, the notion of building a church to seat so many would have been regarded as unintelligible if not blasphemous; that in the first place the church was an offering to God, not a provision for getting worship done; and that in the second, the worship of old with its processions, its numerous altars in the same churches, and so on, made a disproportionate amount of room absolutely necessary,—these were things you could no more have taught Cobbett than you could have taught him to like *Marmion* or read the *Witch of Atlas*.

It is however time, and more than time, to follow him rapidly through the curious labyrinth of work in which, constantly though often very unconsciously keeping in sight this ideal, he wandered from Pittite Toryism to the extreme of half socialist and wholly radical Reform. His sons, very naturally but rather unwisely, have in the great selection of the *Political Works* drawn very sparingly on Peter Porcupine. But no estimate of Cobbett that neglects the results of this, his first, phase will ever be satisfactory. It is by no means the most amusing division of Cobbett's works; but it is not the least characteristic, and it is full of interest for the study both of English and of American politics. The very best account that I know of the original American Constitution, and of the party strife that followed the peace with England, is contained in the summary that opens the *Works*. Then for some years we find Cobbett engaged in fighting the Jacobin party, the fight constantly turning into skirmishes on his private account, con-

ducted with singular vigour if at a length disproportionate to the present interest of the subject. Here is the autobiography before noticed, and in all the volumes, especially the earlier ones, the following of Swift, often by no means unhappy, is very noticeable. It is a little unlucky that a great part of the whole consists of selections from Porcupine's Gazette, that is to say, of actual newspaper matter of the time, — "slag-heaps," to use Carlyle's excellent phrase, from which the metal of present application has been smelted out and used up long ago. This inconvenience also and of necessity applies to the still larger collection, duplicating, as has been said, a little from Porcupine, but principally selected from the *Register*, which was published after Cobbett's death. But this is of far greater general importance, for it contains the pith and marrow of all his writings on the subject to which he gave most of his heart. Here, in the first volume, besides the selection from Porcupine, are the masterly *Letters to Addington on the Peace of Amiens*, in which that most foolish of the foolish things called armistices is treated as it deserved, and with a combination of vigour and statesmanship which Cobbett never showed after he lost the benefit of Windham's patronage and (probably) inspiration. Here too is a defence of bull-baiting after Windham's own heart. The volume ends with the *Letters to William Pitt*, in which Cobbett declared and supported his defection from Pitt's system generally. The whole method and conduct of the writings of this time are so different from the rambling denunciations of Cobbett's later days, and from the acute but rather desultory and extremely personal Porcupinades, that one is almost driven to accept the theory of "inspiration." The literary model too has shifted from Swift to Burke,—Burke upon whom Cobbett was later to pour torrents of his foolishlest abuse; and both in this first and in the second volume the

reformer appears wandering about in search of subjects not merely political but general, Crim. Con., Poor-laws, and so forth. But in the second volume we have to notice a paper still in the old style and full of good sense, on Boxing. In the third Cobbett is in full Radical cry. Here is the article which sent him to Newgate; and long before it a series of virulent attacks on the Duke of York in the matter of Mrs. Clarke, together with onslaughts on those Anti-Jacobins to whom Cobbett had once been proud to belong. It also includes a very curious *Plan for an Army*, which marks a sort of middle stage in Cobbett's views on that subject. The latter part of it, and the whole of the next (the fourth) consist mainly of long series on the Regency (the last and permanent Regency), on the Regent's disputes with his wife, and on the American War. All this part displays Cobbett's growing ill-temper, and also the growing wildness of his schemes—one of which is a sliding scale adjusting all salaries, from the Civil List to the soldier's pay, according to the price of corn. But there is still no loss of vigour, if some of sanity; and the opening paper of the fifth volume, the famous *Address to the Labourers* aforesaid, is, as I have said, perhaps the climax of Cobbett's political writing in point of force and form,—which thing I say utterly disagreeing with almost all its substance. This same fifth volume contains another remarkable instance of Cobbett's extraordinary knack of writing, as well as of his rapidly decreasing judgment, in the *Letter to Jack Harrow, an English Labourer, on the new Cheat of Savings Banks*. At least half of the volume dates after Cobbett's flight, while some is posterior to his return. The characteristics which distinguish his later years, his wild crotchets and his fantastic running-a-muck at all public men of all parties and not least at his own former friends, distinguish both it and the sixth and last, which carries the selection down to his death. Yet even

such things as the *Letter to Old George Rose* and that from *The Labourers of the ten little Hard Parishes* [this was Cobbett's name for the district between Winchester and Whitechurch, much of which had recently been acquired by the predecessors of Lord Northbrook] to *Alexander Baring, Loanmonger*, both, at a considerable distance of time, show the strength and the weakness of this odd person in conspicuous mixture. He is as rude, as coarse, as personal as may be; he is grossly unjust to individuals and wildly flighty in principle and argument; it is almost impossible to imagine a more dangerous counsellor in such, or indeed in any times. Except that he is harder-headed and absolutely unchivalrous, his politics are very much those of Colonel Newcome. And yet the vigour of the style is still so great, the flame and heat of the man's conviction are so genuine, his desire according to the best he knows to benefit his clients, and his unselfishness in taking up those clients, are so unquestionable that it is impossible not to feel both sympathy and admiration. If I had been Dictator about 1830 I think I should have hanged Cobbett; but I should have sent for him first and asked leave to shake hands with him before he went to the gallows.

These collections are invaluable to the political and historical student; and I hardly know any better models, not for the exclusive, but for the eclectic attention of the political writer, especially if his education be academic and his tastes rather anti-popular. But there is better pasture for the general student. The immense variety of the works, which, though they cannot be called non-political—Cobbett would have introduced politics into arithmetic and astronomy, as he actually does into grammar—are not political in main substance and purport. They belong almost entirely, as has been said, to the last seventeen or eighteen years of Cobbett's life; and putting the *Year's Residence* aside, the *English Grammar* is the earliest. It is couched in a

series of letters to his son James, who had been brought up to the age of fourteen on the principle (by no means a bad one) of letting him pick up the Three R's as he pleased, and leaving him for the rest "To ride and hunt and shoot, to dig the beds in the garden, to trim the flowers, and to prune the trees." It is like all Cobbett's books, on whatsoever subject, a wonderful mixture of imperfect information, shrewd sense, and fantastic crotchet. On one page Cobbett calmly instructs his son that "prosody" means "pronunciation"; on another, he confuses "etymology" with "accidence." This may make the malicious college-bred man envious of the author's superior genius; but there is no doubt that the book contains about as clear an account of the practical and working nature and use of sound English speech and writing as can anywhere be found. Naturally Cobbett is not always right; but if any one will compare his book, say with a certain manual composed by a very learned Emeritus Professor in a certain University of Scotland, and largely inflicted on the youth of that kingdom as well as to some extent on those of the adjoining realm, he will not, I think, be in much doubt which to prefer. The grammar was published in 1818, and Cobbett's next book of note was the *Religious Tracts*, afterwards called *Twelve Sermons*. He says that many parsons had the good sense to preach them; and indeed, a few of his usual outbursts excepted, they are as sound specimens of moral exhortation as anybody need wish to hear or deliver. They are completed characteristically enough by a wild onslaught on the Jews, separately paged as if Cobbett was a little ashamed of it. Then came the *Cottage Economy*, instructing and exhorting the English labourer in the arts of brewing, baking, stock-keeping of all sorts, making straw-bonnets, and building ice-houses. This is perhaps the most agreeable of all Cobbett's minor books, next to the *Rural Rides*. The descriptions are as vivid as *Robinson Crusoe*, and are

further lit up by flashes of the genuine man. Thus, after a most peaceable and practical discourse on the making of rush-lights, he writes: "You may do any sort of work by this light; and if reading be your taste you may read the foul libels, the lies, and abuse which are circulated gratis about me by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." Here too is a charming piece of frankness: "Any beer is better than water; but it should have some strength and some weeks of age at any rate." A rearrangement of the *Horse-hoeing Industry* of Jethro Tull, barrister, and the *French Grammar* hardly count among his purely and originally literary work; but the *History of the Reformation* is one of its most characteristic if not one of its most admirable parts. Cobbett's feud with the clergy was now at its height; he had long before been at daggers drawn with his own parson at Botley. The gradual hardening of his economic crazes made him more and more hate "Tithe-Eaters," and his wrath with them was made hotter by the fact that they were as a body opponents of Reform. So with a mixture of astounding ignorance and of self-confidence equally amazing, he set to work to put the crudest Roman view of the Reformation and of earlier times into his own forcible English. The book is very amusing; but it is so grossly ignorant, and the virulence of its tirades against Henry VIII. and the rest so palpable, that even in that heated time it would not do. It may be gathered from some remarks of Cobbett's own that he felt it a practical failure; though he never gave up its views, and constantly in his latest articles and speeches invited everybody to search it for the foundation of all truth about the Church of England. The more important of his next batch of publications, the *Woodlands*, *The English Gardener*, *Cobbett's Corn*, restore a cooler atmosphere; though even here there are the usual spurts. Very amusing is the suppressed wrath of the potato article in the *English Gardener*, with its magnani-

mous admission that "there appears to be nothing unwholesome about it ; and it does very well to qualify the effects of the meat or to assist in the swallowing of quantities of butter." Pleasing too is the remark, "If this turnip really did come from Scotland, there is something good that is Scotch." The *Cobbett's Corn*, already noticed, is one of the most curious of all his books, and an instance of his singular vigour in taking up fancies. Although he sold the seed, it does not appear that he could in any case have made much profit out of it ; and he gave it away so freely that it would, had it succeeded, soon have been obtainable from any seedsman in the kingdom. Yet he writes a stout volume about it, and seems to have taken wonderful interest in its propagation, chiefly because he hoped it would drive out his enemy the potato. The English climate was naturally too much for it ; but the most amusing thing, to me at least, about the whole matter is the remembrance that the "yellow meal" which it, like other maize, produced, became a short time after Cobbett's own death the utter loathing and abomination of English and Irish paupers and labourers, a sort of sign and symbol of capitalist tyranny. Soon afterwards came the last of Cobbett's really remarkable and excellent works, the *Advice to Young Men and Incidentally to Young Women*, one of the kindest and most sensible books of its kind ever written. The other books of Cobbett's later years are of little account in any way ; and in the three little *Legacies (to Labourers, to Peel, and to Parsons)* there is a double portion of now cut-and-dried crotchet in matter, and hardly any of the old power in form.

Yet to the last, or at any rate till his disastrous election, Cobbett was Cobbett. The *Rural Rides*, though his own collection of them stopped at 1830, went on to 1832. This, the only one of his books, so far as I know, that has been repeatedly and recently reprinted, shows him at his best and his worst ;

but almost always at his best in form. Indeed, the reader for mere pleasure need hardly read anything else, and will find there to the full the delightful descriptions of rural England, the quaint, confident, racy, wrong-headed opinions, the command over the English language and the ardent affection for the English soil and its children, that distinguish Cobbett at his very best.

I have unavoidably spent so much time on this account of Cobbett's own works,—an account which without copious extract must be, I fear, still inadequate,—that the anti-Cobbett polemic must go with hardly any notice at all. Towards the crisis of the Reform Bill it became very active, and at times remarkable. Among two collections which I possess, one of bound tracts dating from this period, the other of loose pamphlets ranging over the greater part of Cobbett's life, the keenest by far is a certain publication called *Cobbett's Penny Trash*, which figures in both, though one or two others have no small point. The enemy naturally made the utmost of the statement of the condemned labourer Goodman, who lay in Horsham Gaol under sentence of death for arson, that he had been stirred up by Cobbett's addresses to commit the crime ; but still better game was made controversially of his flagrant and life-long inconsistencies, of his enormous egotism, of his tergiversation in the matter of the offer to discontinue the *Register*, and of his repudiation of his debt to Sir Francis Burdett. And the main sting of the *Penny Trash*, which must have been written by a very clever fellow indeed, is the imitation of Cobbett's own later style, its italics, its repetitions, its quaint mannerisms of fling and vaunt. The example of this had of course been set much earlier by the Smiths in *Rejected Addresses*, but it was even better done here.

Cobbett was indeed vulnerable enough. He, if any one, is the justification of the theory of Time, Country, and *Milieu*, and perhaps the fact



that it only adjusts itself to such persons as he is the chief condemnation of that theory. Even with him it fails to account for the personal genius which after all is the only thing that makes him tolerable, and which when he is once tolerated, makes him almost admirable. Only an English *Terra Filius*, destitute of the education which the traditional *Terra Filius* had, writing too in the stress of the great Revolutionary struggle and at hand-grips with the inevitable abuses which that struggle at once left unbettered, after the usual gradual fashion of English betterment, and aggravated by the pressure of economic changes—could have ventured to write with so little knowledge or range of logical power, and yet have written with such individual force and adaptation of style to the temper of his audience. At a later period and in different circumstances Cobbett could hardly have been so acrimonious, so wildly fantastic, so grossly and almost impudently ignorant, and if he had been he would have been simply laughed at or unread. At an earlier period, or in another country, he would have been bought off or cut off. Even at the same time the mere circumstantial fact of the connection of most educated and well-informed writers with the Government or at least with the regular Opposition, gave such a Free-lance as this an unequalled opportunity of making himself heard. His very inconsistency, his very ferocity, his very ignorance, gave him the key of the hearts of the multitude, who just then were the persons of most importance. And to these persons that characteristic of his which is either most laughable or most disgusting to the educated,—his most unparalleled, his almost inconceivable egotism—was no drawback. When Cobbett with many italics in an advertisement to all his later books told them, “When I am asked what books a young man or young woman ought to read I always answer: ‘Let him or her read *all the books that I have writ-*

*ten,*” proceeding to show in detail that this was no humorous gasconade but a serious recommendation, one “which it is my *duty* to give,” the classes laughed consumedly. But the masses felt that Cobbett was at any rate a much cleverer and more learned person than themselves, had no objection on the score of taste, and were naturally conciliated by his partisanship on their own side. And, clever as he was, he was not too clever for them. He knew that they cared nothing about consistency, nothing about chivalry, nothing about logic. He could make just enough and not too much parade of facts and figures to impress them. And above all he had that invaluable gift of belief in himself and in his own fallacies which no demagogue can do without. I do not know a more fatal delusion than the notion, entertained by many persons, that a mere charlatan, a conscious charlatan, can be effective as a statesman, especially on the popular side. Such a one may be an excellent understrapper; but he will never be a real leader.

In this respect however Cobbett is only a lesson, a memory, and an example, which are all rather dead things. In respect of his own native literary genius he is still a thing alive and delectable. I have endeavoured, so far as has been possible in treating a large subject in little room, to point out his characteristics in this respect also. But as happens with all writers of his kidney he is not easily to be characterised. Like certain wines he has the *goût du terroir*; and that gust is rarely or never definable in words. It is however I think critically safe to say that the intensity and peculiarity of Cobbett’s literary savour are in the ratio of his limitation. He was content to ignore so vast a number of things, he so bravely pushed his ignorance into contempt of them and almost into denial of their real existence, that the other things are real for him and in his writings to a degree almost unexampled. I am not the



first by many to suggest that we are too diffuse in our modern imagination, that we are cumbered about too many things. No one could bring this accusation against Cobbett; for immense as his variety is in particulars, these particulars group themselves under comparatively few general heads. I do not think I have been unjust in suggesting that this ideal was little more than the bellyful, that Messer Gaster was not only his first but his one and sufficient master of arts. He was not irreligious, he was not immoral; but his religion and his morality were of the simplest and most matter-of-fact kind. Philosophy, æsthetics, literature, the more abstract sciences, even refinements of sensual comfort and luxury he cared nothing for. Indeed he had a strong dislike to most of them. He must always have been fighting about something; but I think his polemics might have been harmlessly parochial at another time. It is marvellous how this resolute confinement of view at once sharpens and sublimates the eyesight within the confines. He has somewhere a really beautiful and almost poetical passage of enthusiasm over a great herd of oxen as "so much splendid meat."

He can see the swells of the downs, the flashing of the winter bournes as they spring from the turf where they have lain hid, the fantastic outline of the oak woods, the reddening sweep of the great autumn fields of corn as few have seen them, and can express them all with rare force and beauty in words. But he sees all these things conjointly and primarily from the point of view of the mutton that the downs will breed and the rivers water, the faggots that the labourer will bring home at evening, the bread he will bake and the beer he will brew—strictly according to the precepts of *Cottage Economy*. It may be to some minds a strange and almost incredible combination. It is not so to mine, and I am sure that by dint of it and by dint of holding himself to it he achieved his actual success of literary production. To believe in nothing very much, or in a vast number of things dispersedly, may be the secret of criticism; but to believe in something definite, were it only the bellyful, and to believe in it furiously and exclusively is, with almost all men, the secret of original art.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

## THE EXPERIENCES OF AN AFRICAN TRADER.

It is but a short while since the British public appeared to be possessed with a consuming ardour for enterprise and colonisation in the remoter regions of the African Continent. The blessings of commerce and civilisation were everywhere dilated on. Peans were sung over the self-denial, the patience, the heroism, and the other virtues of African explorers. Mr. Stanley and his comrades started in a blaze of triumph, and with the good wishes of everybody, on their expedition for the rescue of that much-abused Pasha who so incontinently objected to be rescued, and who, unless rumour lies, is now stealthily making his way back to those very provinces whence he was with such vast trouble and expense withdrawn. The African fever was then at its height. The pioneers of trade with the dusky aborigines were the frequent recipients of titles and other rewards, and many men could conceive of no higher ambition than to sit, along with dukes and marquises, on the boards of chartered companies.

But a change has come over the spirit of the scene since the publication of Mr. Stanley's quarrels with his subordinates. The jealousies, the squabbles, and the recriminations of the various parties to that unhappy dispute have an entire literature of their own, and people are growing heartily sick of the whole business. The result is a sudden revulsion of popular sentiment towards African enterprise, and the public now shows, according to its wont, a tendency to rush into the opposite extreme. In place of being the hero of the hour, the explorer of the Dark Continent is represented as one influenced solely by low and mercenary motives. His professions of philanthropy are "all

cant and humbug," and serve as a cloak for filibustering and the commission of crimes of the darkest hue. Have we not had all this, and more to the same effect, from no less a person than Mr. Henry Labouchere, and does he not speak as one having authority? A plague, then, on your philanthropic missions and commercial enterprises! Let the noble savage rest in his pristine and picturesque retirement. He is better as he is. What matter though he starve periodically, though his life be one long struggle with misery that results solely from oppression and anarchy? Let us not mind; famine and the slave-trade are at least preferable to the Bible and bad rum.

All this being so, it is with a feeling of deep contrition that I write myself down as one who, having travelled a good deal in some of its remoter places, thoroughly believes in opening Africa to commerce and civilisation. Nay, I have even gone so far as to actually take part (in a very humble way, to be sure) in the nefarious task myself. It is a humiliating fact that only a short time ago I took a few shares in a trading venture in the Eastern Soudan, and I am now about to describe a few of our preliminary experiences. I say "our" experiences; but I was, after all, but a subordinate performer in the little comedy which was acted for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Red Sea Littoral, though I accept my full share of the responsibility.

Suakin was our base of operations and thither I repaired in the spring of last year, together with my friend, Mr. John Tayler Wills, to whose zeal and energy our Company owes its origin. I do not propose to inflict upon my readers a description of the

queer little Red Sea port or its surroundings. As is well known, it is celebrated neither for the beauty of its scenery nor the salubrity of its climate, though in this latter respect I am inclined to think that it has been somewhat maligned. I shall endeavour, therefore, to keep strictly within the scope and title of the present article, and to confine myself to giving an account of our trading experiences. If, as I fear, these are occasionally pervaded by a vein of comedy such as is not usually incidental to sound business enterprises, the reason must be sought in the fact of our having commenced operations somewhat prematurely, at a period of widespread distress, and before life and property had been rendered safe in the interior. Everything must have a beginning, and blunders customarily mark the initial steps of novel undertakings. So soon as prosperity revives and the Dervishes are finally expelled, and the inland caravan routes are rendered practicable for traders, commercial enterprise in the Eastern Soudan will show very different results.

The apostle of African development should, in my humble opinion, enter on his self-appointed task in a spirit of philanthropy tempered by the more or less remote prospects of dividends. Such, I believe, was the spirit in which Mr. Wills went to work. For myself, it would be wiser to admit,—it would probably be futile to deny,—that I was actuated by those meaner and more degrading motives with which pioneers of commerce in savage countries are now commonly credited. And yet I am not conscious of having committed any overt act of startling wickedness. I supplied the noble Hadendowa with no bad gin or rum, or indeed with spirits of any description. I made no attempts to supersede his native home-grown religion by articles of spurious foreign manufacture. I believe we were guilty of importing Manchester goods, but I am not aware that grey shirtings have any particularly corrupting influence

on the native mind. We had a number of what the Police Court reporters call "coloured persons" in our employ, but we did not treat them after the fashion set by the Emin Relief Expedition. We did not place intolerable loads upon them, except bags of *dhurra* for their own consumption, or flog them severely when they sank under their burdens. We assisted at no cannibal entertainments. Nor, so far as I am aware, did either of us go about showing our teeth, grinning, or "barking like a dog" at our retainers. I never detected Mr. Wills prodding native ladies in the ribs with an iron-pointed Cyprus staff. I certainly did not do so myself. Yet these, I believe, are now accepted as the regular methods of African adventurers, and the fact that we did not employ them is probably due solely to our being new to the business.

On landing at Suakin we found a gallant bevy of native chieftains of various tribes, both great and small, who, together with several hundreds of their followers, had collected in the town to await our arrival. There were fuzzy-wigged Hadendowas and turbaned Amarars, many of whom had fought against the English in the campaigns of 1884-5. There were agriculturists from the Tokar Delta, and even from places so far distant as Filik in the neighbourhood of Kassala. There were strapping mountaineers from the hill country near Sinkat, tribesmen from the coast regions to the north and from the territory bordering on the Suakin-Berber route. Most of the branches of the Ethiopian race seemed to be represented in the dusky throng who, with up-turned faces and eyes glistening with expectation, stood congregated round the Company's house. The news that "the Company was coming" had been spread abroad by over-zealous and officious tongues, and I fear unduly great expectations had been formed of the benefits which were to ensue from its establishment. Visions of bounteous distributions of food floated

before the eyes of these poor creatures, many of whom had been for months past on the verge of starvation. All were possessed with one idea and one only, namely, to get as much *dhurra* (white millet, the staple food of the country) out of the Company as possible. The dreadful famine which decimated the Eastern Soudan during the whole of last year is too well known to need any further allusion here. The knowledge that relief was being served out in Suakin naturally caused a large influx of natives from the interior. Every day our house was besieged by crowds of Arabs, who had been sent, or had come of their own accord, in the hope of getting bread for their famished wives and little ones.

"If you are willing," wrote a friendly sheikh, "to give us the necessary *dhurra*, do so; if not, God is our aid." In fact, instructions seemed to have been universally issued: "Ask for the Soudan Trading Company's *dhurra*, and see that you get it." And to tell the truth, they did get it from Mr. Wills, to the extent of 200,000 lbs. and upwards. The bulk of the distributions were made as advances in consideration of the sheikhs signing contracts for the cultivation of cotton on joint account with the Company. A large amount, however, of the grain thus distributed by way of advances was in reality gratuitous, and the return, if any, upon the outlay will have to be made in another and better world than this. Bread was also served out daily to the famine-stricken poor at the city gates by the local Relief Committee. An excellent impression was thus created among the natives, who began to recognise for the first time that the English, in spite of some previous misdeeds in the country, were after all their best friends. Many were in this way gained over to the side of the Government, and the authority of the Mahdists was undermined. It is most unfortunate that this good impression should have been in a measure weak-

ened last autumn by the cruel decrees of the Government expelling the poor starving creatures from the town, and stopping the trade in grain with the interior, by which terrible suffering was needlessly caused. But I am deviating into the thorny paths of political controversy which are quite beyond the scope of this paper.

We had much talk with the sheikhs of the different tribes and, as may be imagined, we gained much interesting information. The burden of their song was that the Dervishes were the curse of the country, and they would to Heaven they could get rid of them; that the times were very bad and distress universal; that no real improvement in the state of the country could be expected so long as the Mahdists were in power; and, finally, that they liked the English and all wished "to serve the Company." This last phrase surprised me a good deal at first. I had heard so much of the magnificent independence of the haughty Hadendowa that I had imagined he would sooner die than sacrifice his liberty. Yet here they were evidently ready to sell themselves and their services to the highest bidder. If the English did not employ them, then they would go to the Italians. Famine, however, is a hard taskmaster, and the spirit of the coast tribes has been entirely quenched by their sufferings. So much the better for the prospects of the future pacification and progress of the Soudan. The natives have further learned to regard the English with very different feelings from those which animated them a few years ago, and it only requires justice and good government to make these sentiments permanent. One white-haired old gentleman from Filik, who was a large landowner and leading sheikh of the great Hadendowa clan, waxed quite pathetic on the subject. He said he had known Gordon and had served under him, and that he had a great regard for the English. His country at Kassala was almost empty owing to the famine, and the people

there had no work. They did not like to beg for food, but preferred to take it in the form of advances. What they wanted was to have the Company as their father, and if necessary, he said he would go home with us and see all the big aristocrats and the King of England! I noticed, by the way, that all these people showed a very proper filial feeling in the way in which they looked to their "father" to feed them and supply them with money. Personally, I must admit that paternity on so large a scale was a responsibility which would have weighed heavily upon me. Still, the sensation of quasi-suzerainty which their professions conveyed was novel and not displeasing.

One of the first events of importance after our arrival was the return of one of our native traders, whom our agent had despatched to Berber and Khartoum about three months previously. He was a medium-sized, mild-mannered Ethiop, with a transparently honest face, big eyes, and a snub nose. He rejoiced in the name of Mohammed Achmed Waharda Aila, and he boasted himself a *shereef* (descendant of the Prophet) of the Amara tribe. In obedience to Kismet and Osman Digna's decree enforcing shaven crowns, he had sacrificed his touzled fuzzy wig and wore in its place a parti-coloured turban. The account he gave of his stewardship was, to say the least of it, highly entertaining. Commerce in these out-of-the-way parts is conducted upon strangely primitive principles according to our European notions. First of all you have to catch your trader. When you think you have got hold of a fairly honest man you supply him with a good stock of selected samples of grey shirtings, buy him a camel or two for the journey, and start him off. These goods he exchanges up country for gold or silver, gum, ivory, musk, frankincense, myrrh, or other produce of the interior. Of course you have to trust entirely to the man's honesty in the account he renders on his return, and I believe experience shows that

No. 386.—VOL. LXV.

the confidence thus reposed is very seldom abused. They also tell me that some people have amassed colossal fortunes in this way. I can only say that as yet I am not one of those fortunate persons.

Waharda Aila appeared to have got along pretty well as far as Berber, the monotony of the journey being broken only by an attack from some marauding Baggaras who stole one of his camels and seven *korugas* (pieces) of grey shirting. This, however, is one of the more commonplace incidents of Eastern travel and is scarcely worth recording. These Baggaras are a warlike freebooting tribe of Kordofan Arabs, with a great deal of black blood in their veins. As *The Times* put it they "combine professional brigandage with a burning faith," and, together with the Jaaleens from near Dongola, they form the mainstay of Osman Digna's army.

Arriving at Berber, Waharda Aila went straight to the house of one En Noor Greffeiyeh, the Hakeemdar, or Director of Customs to the Mahdi. To this official he was the bearer of presents and a letter from our agent in Suakin. En Noor received him (and the presents) with open arms, and was good enough to write us a letter in reply. In this document the Hakeemdar dilated upon the high regard in which he held his friends of the Sudan Trading Company. He expressed the hope that we might some day join the true faith, in which alone, he assured us, we could expect to find peace and happiness both in this world and in the next. As a proof of his esteem he had taken four hundred dollars off our messenger, and I rather gathered from the context that he hoped this was not the last time he might have the opportunity of doing so. The following are some extracts from the Hakeemdar's epistle.

From En Noor Greffeiyeh, son of En Noor Ibrahim, the Director of Customs at Berber, to my friends in God and the Prophet, greeting.

I have received your letter, and the four

boxes of tea and the box of sugar and the carpet have arrived. May God give you back tenfold. Your present is accepted by us, but in future do not send us letters. [He was afraid of their compromising him as having accepted bribes from the infidel.] On the arrival of your people the Khalifa directed that they should all go to the *Bug'aa* (Treasury) to buy ivory, and in consequence of your request that I should care for them I sent them with a letter to the Director-General of the common purse at the *Bug'aa*, recommending them to him, and there they sold their merchandise; and they might have obtained ivory if they had wished, but in consequence of my recommendation they were not forced to take either gum or ivory, as it [the ivory, presumably] had been all under water and would have been useless for you. Now we send you a present of one sword and a uniform, and we hope you will accept them and have fortune with them; and we have taken from your messenger Mohammed Achmed Waharda Aila four hundred dollars, and we trust you will repay him [a pretty cool request, I thought]; and when he returns here again with goods it will be deducted from the duty upon them. And as regards merchandise here, cotton piece-goods are very bad to sell [here follows advice about trade which is not worth recording]. . . . Be not afraid but rely on our friendship. Destroy this when you have read it, for it is impossible for us to write to each other, but as you have been kind and good to us, we write. The peace.

The elaborate precautions taken by the wily Hakeemdar to avoid compromising himself failed to avert the doom which awaited him, and which, I have little doubt, he richly merited. Being detected, not many months later, in the peculation of certain dues which he had intended to divert from the pockets of the Mahdi to his own, the Khalifa ordered his head to be chopped off, and the sentence was duly carried into effect. I should add that the sword and uniform arrived in due course, and the latter lies before me as I write. It is a long white cotton garment covered with patches of red, blue, and black cloth, which I believe are marks of distinction denoting an officer of high rank in the Dervish army.

From Berber our trader proceeded to Khartoum, and he gave us a harrowing account of the traces of ruin and desolation left by the twin destroyers, war and famine, in the districts he traversed. The country was almost denuded of its inhabitants, and such few as remained were perishing of hunger. At Metammeh not a soul was left. The way was strewn with human skulls and bones. All the *sakiyehs*, or waterwheels, were silent, for their owners were no more. At Khartoum itself widows and orphans were in the majority: *dhurra* was at eight times its normal price; and even Slatin Bey, Gordon's sole surviving lieutenant, was begging for food. Here Waharda Aila was subjected to further extortion at the hands of the Mahdist officials. A gentleman of the name of Ibrahim Walad Etlan, who appeared to be a sort of Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Khalifa, required *baksheesh* at his hands, though, to do him justice, he was more moderate in his demands than the Hakeemdar of Berber. But then neither did he send us a sword and uniform nor a nice letter full of pretty compliments. Circumstances being so unfavourable for trade, Waharda made no great stay at Khartoum. Having finally disposed of the remainder of his merchandise, he returned by easy stages to Snakin, dropping a few more dollars on the way at Handoub, which were exacted from him by Achmed Mahmoud, the Dervish commander of that stronghold.

After such an interesting narrative it seemed almost impertinent to ask, but I did venture to inquire what he had to show for the grey shirtings and camels and other equipment where-with he had been endowed prior to his departure up country. He replied that he had got some gold in rings, a large horn of musk, and an Abyssinian woman.

"Abyssinian woman?" said I. "what's she for?"

"Oh! I bought her," replied Waharda Aila, in no whit abashed.



"Bought her? Why did you buy her, and where is she?"

He said that he had left the lady in the hills at the back of Handoub (a most ungallant proceeding, I thought) for fear of Achmed Mahmoud, who would most assuredly have taken and appropriated her for his own use. She would probably follow him into Suakin, he added, or else he would himself go and fetch her, when we should have an opportunity of seeing for ourselves the latest addition to the live stock of the Soudan Trading Company.

Gradually the real nature of the transaction in which we had been vicariously engaged dawned upon me, and the truth presented itself to my mind in all its naked hideousness. *Qui facit per alium facit per se* is a fine old legal maxim which, in the days when I was at the Bar, I often heard Her Majesty's Judges roll forth with portentous solemnity from the Bench. On this principle beyond question we had been constructively guilty of slave-trading. We, philanthropic pioneers in the vanguard of commerce and civilisation, would be branded and pointed at with the finger of scorn as having actually taken part in the vile traffic in human flesh. It was terrible! I pictured to myself the Anti-Slavery Society up in arms against us, and the Aborigines' Protectionists foaming at the mouth with indignation, and I fairly staggered under the blow. I had received the news of the theft of our dollars by En Noor and the Chancellor of the Exchequer at Khartoum without blanching: I had borne with stoical indifference the loss of the camel and the grey shirtings; but this last was too much.

Summoning all my fortitude, I faintly inquired how this atrocity had come to be perpetrated in our name. And then the murder came out. It appeared that our agent in Suakin, who to his other virtues seemed to add a vein of knight-errantry, had given Waharda Aila orders, if he got the chance, to purchase the freedom of any of the white women now in captivity at

Khartoum. It is well known that at the time of General Gordon's death, when the capital of the Soudan fell into the hands of the Mahdists, several white people resident in the town were taken prisoners and sold into slavery. Among them were several young high-born Italian ladies who had gone out as nuns in the service of the Roman Catholic Church. Splendid creatures they were too, I was assured by an impressionable Suakinee who had seen them pass through the town some years before, with lovely faces and aristocratic mien. After the fall of Khartoum these nuns are said to have gone through the ceremony of marriage with some of the Greek captives in order to save themselves from being sold into the harems of the Mahdists, and, for all that is known to the contrary, they are still alive in the town. There was also said to be kept in duranceville there an old lady who did General Gordon's washing during the siege, and she, it was supposed, might be bought out. If we could not purchase an Italian nun, by all means let us liberate a washerwoman. Well, Waharda Aila was told to procure, if he could, the freedom of any or all of these distressed damsels. But he maintained, and stuck to his point with great pertinacity, that he was not restricted by his instructions to "white" women. His orders were, he said, to liberate "Christian women." Now, it happens that the Abyssinians are Christians, and our excellent trader had evidently made use of the discretion given him to purchase himself a suitable wife.

We asked him how much he had paid for her. He calmly replied, "Two hundred dollars, and two dollars brokerage." The cold-blooded business-like air in which he uttered these words was staggering. I was not aware before that they had brokers in those outlandish parts. I omitted to ask him if there were any stockjobbers as well, but the "two dollars brokerage" smacked so strongly of my native haunts in the region of Capel Court that I should hardly have been sur-

prised if he had added an extra charge for "stamp and fee."

A few days later Waharda Aila went and brought the girl into Suakin. It was just my luck that I should be absent on a shooting expedition when she arrived, but Mr. Wills describes her as young, charming, lady-like, with pretty brown eyes, regular features, and an oval face. She had likewise an elegant figure and a voice of singular sweetness. I fancy that we could have sold her over in Jeddah at a figure which would have given us a handsome profit on the bargain. Only I am not quite sure if she had had the distemper,—I mean the small-pox. This, I ought perhaps to explain, makes a considerable difference in the price of this class of goods, as when they have once had the disease they are considered secure against a second attack. She was the widow of an Abyssinian colonel, and had been taken prisoner at her country house by a band of Dervish raiders who had killed her two little children and sold her into slavery. She appeared to have conceived in the course of their long journey down to the sea-coast a genuine attachment for Waharda Aila, and though in Suakin he was torn from her embraces by the action of a ruthless executive, I sincerely trust that their enforced parting will not be for ever.

It was somewhat embarrassing to have a young woman suddenly thrown on your hands in this unceremonious fashion, but Mr. Wills was equal to the occasion. In foreign parts, when in doubt go to the Consul. Accordingly our newest purchase was taken round to Mr. Barnham, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Suakin, who entrusted her to the care of an Abyssinian residing in the town, and she lodged with him for the space of some months. As soon as the Egyptian authorities got wind of the matter they promptly arrested Waharda Aila and lodged him in the town-gaol on the charge of slave-trading, and it was with some difficulty

that we eventually procured his release.

Before quitting this interesting topic of native ladies and their admirers, I may mention the following curious custom which prevails among the tribes of the Eastern Soudan. When there are two rival suitors for the hand of a Hadendowa beauty they commonly agree to decide the issue by a peculiar kind of duel. The weapons are heavy *kourbash*es of hippopotamus hide, and the combatants, stripped to the waist, lay on until one of them sinks exhausted and bleeding to the ground. The fair prize herself looks on, and occasionally intervenes and puts an end to the fight. Dr. Junker alluding to this custom (*Travels in Africa*, p. 57) says that the victor in these combats acquires "the honourable title of *Akhu-el-benat*, or Defender of the Village Maiden, of which he is not a little proud." We never had an opportunity of witnessing one of these duels, though we were told that one had taken place in Suakin a few days before we arrived.

Two or three others of our traders came in soon after Waharda Aila. None of their experiences were so entertaining as his, but they all had similar tales to tell of robbery, official and unofficial, and of the lamentable state of things up country. They brought back money and various odds and ends of merchandise, but their transactions showed little profit. Trading with the interior, however, was a matter of secondary importance in our eyes. What chiefly occupied our attention was the cotton crop which was said to be growing for us in the Tokar Delta, and for the planting of which our agent had supplied the natives with seed. The cultivation of cotton is unquestionably the most promising and profitable industry in the Soudan. The plant was introduced from there into Egypt by Mehemet Ali, and excellent results were obtained from its cultivation in the districts round Suakin before the outbreak of the rebellion. There are estimated to be

over half-a-million acres of fertile land suitable for cotton growing in the Tokar Delta alone, which in the rainy season is copiously irrigated by the waters of the Khor Baraka.

It had been represented to us that we should be able to go down to Tokar to look after the crop ourselves. As a matter of fact, however, though Osman Digna gave us permission to trade with the inhabitants he peremptorily forbade Christians to set foot within the Delta, and commerce was obviously impossible under such conditions. The cotton was there undoubtedly, but how much of it were we likely to get? It struck me that the Dervishes were not likely to let us have much in any case, but, as it turned out, the crop never came to maturity. According to what the natives told us it was getting on very nicely, when lo! a great cloud of locusts issued forth, covered the face of the earth generally and our cotton-land in particular, and stripped the plants perfectly bare. Furthermore it was said that, some of the cultivators having omitted to fence in their land properly, what the locusts ate not, the camels devoured. I was not aware that the camel fed upon cotton, though doubtless nothing comes amiss to that beast's voracious maw, from a brass-headed nail to a tin lobster-can. After blowing themselves out with our cotton the locusts appear to have taken wing eastwards. Surfeited, however, with over-much good living, they fell in a heap into the Red Sea, covering its waves so that a man might, metaphorically speaking, have walked dry-shod from one shore to another; and the air was filled with a savour too horrible for words to describe. Was it not written in the chronicles of the *St. James's Gazette* and other newspapers that a vessel passing through the Red Sea homeward bound in the summer of last year steamed for three whole days through a compact mass of the corpses of these insects? This may have been a slight exaggeration, but there can be no

doubt that this blight of locusts was a most extraordinary one, and from all accounts the visitation was entirely without parallel in recent years.

We received from time to time throughout the year letters, some of which were curious specimens of Oriental style, from native chiefs and merchants. Many of them are interesting as throwing light on the events which led up to the Egyptian advance and occupation of Tokar. The writers all professed themselves anxious to trade with and "serve" the Company, but they lived in perpetual dread of their masters the Dervishes. Hence political allusions were not very frequent in these letters, our correspondents being afraid of compromising themselves in case the documents fell into the hands of the Mahdists. The slightest suspicion of an intention to go over to the Egyptians would inevitably have been visited with death, or torture and mutilation. Just before the battle of Tokar Osman Digna decapitated several sheikhs who were supposed to be leaning to the side of the Government. His tyranny and barbarity had long been causing a strong feeling of discontent with the rule of the Dervishes, when the famine came and brought matters to a head. The growing spirit of disaffection was sedulously fanned by Mr. Wills, who lost no opportunity of pointing out the advantages, pecuniary and otherwise, which would follow from the expulsion of Osman and his emirs. These representations made a great impression, especially as the moral was usually pointed with copious distributions of *dhurra*. I was not surprised, therefore, when in the summer an offer was made by some of the sheikhs to raise a large force to drive out the Dervishes, if only the Company would supply them with food. This offer was reported to the Government, and to any one conversant with the state of the country and the wishes and aspirations of the natives, it was evident that the times were ripe for the

advance from Suakin which the authorities so wisely determined on. The best proof of the sentiments of the coast tribes on the subject of a change of government lies in the fact that none of them fought against the Egyptians at Tokar, and that the news of the victory was received with general rejoicing.

One of our most frequent correspondents was one Seyed Khamisi, a merchant of Tokar, who, having started life as a pedlar, a *walad el terek* or son of the road, had by superior cunning and industry gained a leading position among the native merchants. He used to talk very pompously about his influence in the Delta, the entire trade of which he professed to hold in the palm of his hand. The following are extracts from one of his more characteristic letters. We had written to him asking whether we could go down to Tokar in person :

I informed Taha el Magdub of your wish and he has no objection, but he fears some of the badly educated people, and he desires when El Emir Osman Abu Bakr Digna arrives to show your letter to him ; and when our hearts are easy we will write to you. One lion can control a thousand foxes, but a thousand foxes cannot control one lion. So, when the lion [Osman Digna] comes he will distinguish between right and wrong, and between the weak and the strong, and you will be satisfied and your requirements executed. As for the merchandise and cotton-seed and its sowing, we inform you that this has been agreed upon by the order of the Lord of All, El Khalifa el Mahdi (peace be on his name) and of all his agents and sub-agents.

The phrase "badly educated people" would seem to have referred to the fanatical emirs whose thoughts were not of trading and the things of this life, but of the joys of Paradise after death in battle with the Kafirs. For such pig-headed bigotry and indifference to worldly interests Seyed Khamisi had the profoundest contempt. "As for the emirs," he wrote in a subsequent letter, "nothing is too silly for them. All they want is to die, no

matter how, as they want to go to Paradise, either by gunshot or starvation. But I, and many who are like me, who have wives and children, —we do not want to die. We want to live, and to eat and drink every day, and to trade, and to better the condition of the poor." Another sheikh, who was anxious to enter into trading relations with the Company, expressed himself similarly in the summer on the subject of the Dervish rulers. "Wallah !" he exclaimed, "we are all grateful to the Company. We will obey and serve you, and we wished to trade with you, but our emirs (may God abolish them !) put every obstacle in our way."

Moral reflections were scattered about some of Seyed Khamisi's epistles, such as : "My friend, the liar will not prosper. His time is short, and he will inherit baseness and condemnation and black faces among his fellow-creatures." He further assured us that the growing of cotton was a large business and required trustworthy agents like himself, "men who respect themselves, and have property, and like gain." None the less his effusions showed throughout the craft and tortuousness which seem almost inseparable from the Oriental mind. I do not know where Homer located his "blameless Ethiopians," but I feel very sure it cannot have been in the Tokar Delta ; for, unless the children of Ham have altered strangely for the worse since his day, the epithet seems most inappropriate.

There was one letter, that we received, however, which was of an entirely different character, and, though it is of earlier date than the others, I think it deserves reproduction in full. Some of the sentences breathe a spirit of fervent Moslem piety, and there is a fine Covenanter-like ring about it throughout. One of the principal writers, Abu Giregh, was known to us as a brave soldier and sincere Mahomedan, though he was less fanatically bigoted than most Moslems in the Eastern Soudan. He

used at one time to be a trusted emir of the Mahdi, but his larger views and more liberal opinions caused him to incur suspicion of favouring the Egyptians, and he fell into disgrace. The "attack of our auxiliary cavalry" refers to a skirmish which arose out of one of the numerous raids that were constantly taking place round Suakin at that time. The following is the text of the letter as translated to us:

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, etc., etc. From the servants of their Lord, whose trust is in Him, Magdub Abu Bakr, Mohammed Othman Abu Girgeh, and from us the successor of the Mahdi (peace be upon his name, the inspired saint, our intercessor before God!) Achmed Rachma; to Antonius Saad—may God lead him and convert his mind. Amen.

Now we have received your letter dated 8 Rabi II., and what you mentioned therein of the attack of our auxiliary cavalry near the circle of Suakin, and its results upon the protection of traders and of their goods in the ports both of Trinkitat and Akik, and what you have stated to the people of Suakin, namely, that this attack of our horsemen was made unknown to us.

Know thou that we have not overstepped justice and right, and that the peace which we agreed to, and accorded to all who may come to the Mahdist territory in the Eastern land [Eastern Soudan] and the districts of Massowah and Suakin, (whether they come with merchandise or alone, and whether they come from seawards or from landwards) it remains without objection or restraint, except as regards what is necessarily prohibited by the law of God [alcohol, etc.]; and we did not seize, and shall not seize, them or their goods; for we are bound to them by our agreement as regards this peace. Let this suffice.

As regards this affair of our horsemen and its result, you must know that some of the Arabs who live about Ribat "lifted" our cattle like thieves, and we sent horsemen in pursuit direct, who overtook them near Suakin and killed those who stood and offered resistance, and recaptured the cattle and brought it back. Such is the punishment for the ungodly. That is what was done by our mounted men.

And as regards the government of this land, know thou that we trust in God and

place our reliance upon Him. He will support those who trust in Him, as is declared in His Holy Book in the words, "May the Lord be exalted: there is no creeping thing upon earth but He provides for its necessities."

As regards the letter of Seyed Khamisi, you should know that we have read it, and we heard what he had to say, and spoke to him and made him understand that every merchant who shall come from the coast or the interior alike has our protection, for the good and for the peace of God, and His Prophet, and His Mahdi; and the Khalifa is our security. And now we inform them that trade is open just as it was before. Let this be known.

7 Rabi II. 1307. [end of October, 1889.]

As I have already explained, the opening of trade with the interior was in those days a delusion and a snare. The advance, however, from Suakin of the Egyptian troops, and the occupation of the surrounding country, has completely altered the complexion of affairs. The battle of Tokar marks the commencement of a new era in the Eastern Soudan. The coast tribes, sickened by long years of Dervish oppression and its attendant horrors, famine and bloodshed, are submitting quietly and cheerfully to the new order of things. If only the government are successful in establishing order and just rule their position is assured, and prosperity will be restored to the country. Above all it is essential that good faith should be kept with the natives, and past engagements and undertakings must be scrupulously adhered to if future military expenditure is to be kept within reasonable limits. Mahdism is a slowly dying cause. The religious element in it has long since spent its force among the peasantry, while its foundations as a political principle have been sapped by the misery and sufferings which the Arabs have had to endure, and for which it is largely responsible. Gradually, as the advantages of the new rule make themselves felt, fresh tribes will send in their submission, until at length the whole region north of Khartoum between the



Nile and the Red Sea falls into the lap of the Egyptian Government. We may anticipate spasmodic efforts from time to time on the part of the Dervishes to regain their lost prestige, but the secession of the coast tribes is a blow from which they can scarcely recover. South of the Mahdist capital their tenure of power is more secure. There the pinch of poverty has not been so severely felt owing to the excellent crops produced in Sennaar, and it may be many years before the forces of the Khalifa are finally expelled.

Let us take a peep forward into what I believe to be the not far distant future of the Eastern Soudan. In my mind's eye I see the Arab peasant for the first time sowing his crop in the sure knowledge that he will enjoy the reaping and the profit thereof himself. The ceaseless tribal warfare of the last ten years, which decimated the male population, has ceased. The shepherd, no longer as formerly a nomad from necessity, tends his flocks in tranquillity and peace. Practical, if unambitious, irrigation works have made many waste places productive. At Suakin there is a moderate trade; not the vast system of commerce of which some enthusiasts have dreamed, but enough to keep several firms in business. "Little by little" should now be the motto of the Soudan trader. Let the comparative failure which has hitherto attended the two ambitious schemes of the East African Chartered Company act as a warning.

In the days of which I am speaking there will have been a revolution in the system of transport. The camel will have been partially superseded by the locomotive. The railway to Berber will then be an accomplished fact. Abyssinian young ladies, no longer captive but free, will be able with their lovers to take third-class return tickets

from Khartoum to Suakin. The resources of civilisation will make themselves felt more and more. Penny steamboats will be plying on old Nile between Omdoorman and Khartoum. The Mahdi will be deposed, and Mr. Thomas Cook, who has already annexed Lower Egypt to his extensive domains, will reign in his stead. Enterprising tourists will be personally conducted to the great lakes and the Bahr al Ghazal. Cheap trips will be organised up the Blue Nile into Abyssinia, Macadamised roads will thread the now trackless forests and swamps, and where once the camel swung by with slow and noiseless tread the scream of the locomotive will scare the lion and the elephant from their lairs. The slave-trade will be attacked at its fountain-head. The hydra-headed monster is but barely scotched now, but in the days that are to be it will have received its death-blow. The administrative genius of the English race, to which the prosperity of Egypt now bears silent witness, will achieve fresh triumphs in a wider field. Another outlet for the teeming millions of Europe will be found in the salubrious valleys and plateaux of Equatoria, and "British spheres of influence" will extend from the Cape of Good Hope to the Mediterranean.

It is a golden dream from one point of view, though the lifting of the veil of mystery which till lately has shrouded the recesses of Africa cannot but give rise to certain saddening reflections. Meanwhile, whether for good or for ill, the old order is rapidly giving place to the new. Civilisation marches onward with resistless tread, and the vast territories of the Eastern Soudan, temporarily abandoned to anarchy and barbarism, are now about to enter upon the new destiny which is reserved for the entire African Continent.

HUGH E. M. STUTFIELD.



## TRYPHENA AND TRYPHOSA.

### I.

TRYPHENA joined the Army of Salvation because she knew of no larger field for display and publicity than the one to be found within its ranks. Therefore, you perceive, her knowledge of life was limited. She had a clear voice and no shyness whatsoever, two capital necessities for a lass who seeks advancement. And Tryphena always meant advancement. She had no conception of being left behind in life. Advantage to herself was the goal of her existence. Her beauty was perhaps rather a drawback in the profession of struggling saints, but it might not be regarded as an entire disability if there were extenuating circumstances of piety attached to her conduct. Tryphena of course had resolved that her piety should distinguish her from her fellows. She was not of the rank and file in any profession.

Tryphosa joined the Army for very different reasons. The first one was that her twin sister had elected to follow in its paths, and her life apart from that beloved sister was but a poor and starving thing. As much as Tryphena desired her own advancement, so much did Tryphosa desire it for her. And this other twin had a soul tinged with a devout colour, a colour of a primary nature, undimmed by any complementary shade of ambition or self-interest. This is rare in any sort of piety.

The twin sisters were exceedingly fair to see, bearing a strong resemblance to each other in the calm Madonna style, with smoothly rippling hair and deep grey eyes. The only difference was this: Tryphena's eyes said a good deal in the way of tenderness and beseechment, and meant next to nothing at all; Tryphosa's said not so much, but meant considerably more. This

last one had the soul of some far off ancestress who had been sincere and righteous and pure of heart; and Tryphena had the looks and outward expression of the same remote lady, looks which corresponded to the soul from which they were now divided.

The Twins had been camp-followers of the Army from their childhood, not so much willingly as of necessity. At an early stage of their existence Mr. Paul, their now deceased parent, had dressed them up in miniature uniform, poke bonnets, serge frocks and requisite badges, and so attired had drawn attention to himself leading them, one on each side, to the roll-call and the Sunday gatherings. At such meetings he sang hymns fervently and testified to his own satisfactory security in the Bank of Eternal Life.

The infantile grace of the little pair attracted many eyes, and many motherly hearts in the assemblies yearned over the exquisite childhood protected but feebly by a wild-eyed visionary.

During the early girlhood of the Twins this protector disappeared for some considerable time without any explanation as to his sudden departure. Tryphosa, little mystic, ever credulous of the miraculous, had secretly cherished the belief that some chariot of fire had removed her parent from the scene of his earthly labours. This belief was subsequently rudely dispelled by his re-appearance in a common cab and in a by no means spiritualised form. His face and figure had undergone alterations and, it must be allowed, improvements. His hair, formerly neglected (for in this matter the Army does not always conform to order), had more than a military closeness of cut about it, and his figure had put on flesh in a really considerable way, testi-

fying, at least, that he had not been called upon to exercise self-denial or rigorous abstinence during his temporary removal.

But Mr. Paul was silent in the presence of his children regarding any new experiences of exile, and only prayed more abundantly for his enemies, leading the Twins to suppose he had been at the mercy of his foes. As a matter of course the Army received him back and the whisper "deserter" never, at least, reached his children's ears. Still they took notice that his offices had fallen from him in his absence, and that his oratory no longer graced the customary platform.

A period of rigid abstinence and self-denial ensued, and before many weeks he fell away from plumpness. As the leanness came upon him his religious fervour, or fanaticism, became more marked. He continually pointed out to the girls the significant names he had given them; Tryphena and Tryphosa "who labour in the Lord." And as he worked himself into a frenzy of exalted enthusiasm and gave vent to prophecy, the Twins would be driven in fear and trembling to the shelter of some neighbour's rooms. Night after night he disturbed them with wild mutterings, and in his dreams fought fearful conflicts with the Powers of Evil. A few months more found him sunken-eyed, hollow-cheeked, and exhausted. The spiritual unrest seemed to eat up his flesh, the fire of religious ardour to consume his very life. And then one night, after a day spent in much mental excitement, Mr. Paul fell fainting in the street, a stream of blood pouring from his pale lips. The cerebral agitation had been too much,—he had burst a blood-vessel. He was carried to the nearest hospital, and there with his last audible breath he consigned the Twins to the care of the Army. That was the end of a strangely complex piece of humanity. When this poor Paul was not a fanatic he was a criminal. Extremes meet perilously. His moods of spiritual exaltation had

for years alternated with outbreaks of crime, when he was hardly responsible for his actions. This human amalgam was charged with potent forces which made him an almost involuntary actor in the periodical fits of zeal and attacks of vice by which he was seized. Can we judge such as these by the laws applied to ordinary flesh and blood?

Out of such parentage what could be expected to come but vice and insanity? Yet stay! Was there not the far-off ancestress to be reckoned with? Her virtue, her transcendent purity, no less than her noble features, generations of erring descendants had not been able to wear out. The fair image had not been debased by the alloy of impure blood, and the worthy spirit had passed on pure and undefiled through many an unworthy life. There was a strain of this same virtue still existent, nay quick with life, in the young Tryphosa's soul.

## II.

THE girls were in due course put out to service under the auspices of the protecting Army, and the brigadier himself took occasional note of their welfare. But the Christian families with which their lot was cast (small tradespeople for the most part) did not carry their devotion into the minute details of every-day practice. They kept salvation as a thing apart, chiefly to be taken out on Sundays and at special meetings. Therefore the house of bondage was at times very grievous to endure.

Tryphena found the washing and dressing and feeding and carrying out of five unwholesome children more than uncongenial tasks. Her beautiful placid brow concealed no motherly thoughts or instincts, and she hated the life which held no beauty or variety. There was hardly time to dress herself, much less to brush her long abundant hair and to see to the making of her clothes. As for Tryphosa she would have scrubbed floors and dishes with endless patience if she might have been permitted to live in

the same house, or even in the same street, with her sister. Occasionally to catch a glimpse from her scullery window of Tryphena's ankles, as she wheeled a perambulator down the pavement, would have been bliss enough to content her loving heart. But it was not to be. They were far divided and in different service, and she pined secretly for her twin sister.

One Sunday the pair took counsel, as they were seated together on one of the benches in Holland Walk. The nursemaid lived at Notting Hill and the scullery wench was located at West Kensington. This spot was therefore selected as a happy point of meeting, and one with the advantage attached to it that they were able to sit down.

Thus, shoulder to shoulder on the friendly bench, the fair young sisters drew the attention of more than one passer-by. They were singularly alike as to features, singularly unlike as to dress. One wore cheap flowers in her hat and kid gloves; the other wore no gloves at all and had crowned herself with a sailor-hat of infinitesimal proportions—the cast-off headgear of her mistress. Somehow this sailor hat, surmounting the refined face and pale brown hair, had a curiously incongruous appearance. A second glance provoked a smile from some who passed by.

"Have you got half-a-crown to spare, Phosa dear? I'm clean run out again to-day." This was how an interview always began or ended.

Of course "Phosa dear" dipped her rough little hand deep down into a capacious pocket. She brought therefrom a brass thimble, a folded handkerchief, a door-key and a match box before she grasped her shabby little purse. Phena quickly turned it inside out, and her calm eyes brightened somewhat because there was an odd shilling and three halfpence over and above the sum demanded. Her hand closed so tightly over it that the cheap glove split itself down the middle.

"You don't mind, dear?"

Of course the "dear" shook her

head vehemently with a soft smile of denial. How could she say now that she had intended the purchase of a new hat?

"I've been thinking," said the Twin with the more beseeching eyes, looking down sadly at the rent in the kid glove, "that I've had enough of service."

"Oh, Phena! And such a lovely baby as it is."

"Lovely? Ah, you don't have it by night times." Which was an undeniable proof of a baby's excellence or otherwise.

Tryphena appeared to have forgotten that she had herself selected the situation of nursemaid in preference to one of washer-up, as being better paid and a more genteel occupation, less likely to soil the hands. This young person took great care of her hands, which were beautiful, in natural accordance with other physical perfections. "And," went on the leisurely voice which was refined and harmonious, "I've been thinking that I'll go in a shop and join the Army."

"What?" The sailor-hat tilted forward.

"Join the Salvationists?"

"Why, I thought you hated every one that belonged to it!"

"So I do, but I don't hate them so bad as babies and being tied up of an evening."

Tryphosa looked away. She did not understand—she never had understood—her sister's hatred of rule and restraint and her restless desire to act a prominent part on life's busier stage. Her own soul spoke otherwise of submission and humility. Nevertheless the Army meant notoriety in its more respectable form, and well accorded with her personal pious yearnings.

"Poor father, he wished us to work for the Army," she said gently, as if to extenuate or conceal the possibility of any other reason in Phena's mind.

"Oh," said the other Twin with a majestic elevation of her head, equivalent to any amount of contemptuous utterance, "don't remind me of him!"

I sha'n't grow ugly and thin like some of them do." She glanced round with superb disdain of such a possibility. A couple of shop-boys lounging past with cheap Sunday cigars between their lips cast an admiring glance at the speaker as her clear voice reached their ears. The girl chilled their too expressive gaze with a level glance, and they moved on more quickly.

"We could be together more often," said the less objective Twin, not having observed this irrelevant incident.

"Why?" said Phená with almost a touch of sharpness. "You didn't think about going too?" It would be very much pleasanter if the little washer-up stood afar off as an admirer, remaining willing to supply half-crowns at short notice. Tryphena did not lose sight of the possibility that the Army might otherwise hold the monopoly of superfluous coins.

"Oh, yes," said the Madonna in the sailor-hat with great fervour. "I'll join too. It's only you that have kept me back."

And so it was settled, and a little quiver about the nostrils was all that betrayed the other girl's dissatisfaction. Tryphena took an omnibus back to Notting Hill, but Tryphosa walked with an empty pocket all the way to West Kensington and was duly scolded for being out after hours.

### III.

A FEW Sundays later the Twins, being released from servitude, appeared at a public gathering and subsequently became regular attendants. They were a pair of conspicuous figures,—tall, and one almost stately—with a certain distinguishing air of expectation and freshness about their behaviour. They were not familiar with the other members of the meeting, and were backward in religious comments and responses. Original sin might yet be detected by a discerning eye in the elaborate plaiting of Tryphena's pale brown hair and in the faultless cut and

fit of her serge gown. Gloves she no longer wore, but the absence of these only drew attention to the shapely hands she took such care of.

One Sunday, towards the end of the summer, this branch of the Army was holding a preliminary out-door service in an open space of ground not yet given over to the builder. This plot was the centre of many converging streets, and drew together from the four quarters a number of poor and degraded creatures on the look-out for some Sunday afternoon recreation. At the first sound of this roll-call the crowd began to come up to the noise where they knew salvation was cheaply advertised. The standard being unfurled, the drums and tambourines set to work, and helped to stir up the enthusiasm of the lukewarm spectators.

It was Tryphosa's task to walk about the outside edge of the crowd and to dispose of a sheaf of newspapers. "*A Cry*, sir?" she said to each newcomer with a certain timid deprecation of a rude denial. Tryphena, having the distinguishing gift of a voice, had been selected this afternoon for solo singing of hymns. This task brought her prominently into notice, to her own satisfaction. But she did not betray her pleasure, only with an easy graceful dignity took up a prominent position in the centre of the circle. There was something really imposing about the tall straight figure clad in heavy serge that took thick folds about her. The lofty carriage of her noble head was more striking as she sang, and the chorus of warriors joined in at the end of the hymn with more than customary force and fire. Surely the circle of men and maids had never enclosed a more beautiful recruit! Tryphosa paused to join in the chorus as she edged round the crowd. Her pulse quickened with a mingled rapture of enthusiasm and thanksgiving. She had no desire to occupy her sister's place, but she perceived, or thought she perceived, that this lovely creature, her own flesh and blood,

was leading others in the way of salvation. A strange gladness overwhelmed her and her eyes filled with happy tears.

A voice behind her arrested her attention,—a languid gentlemanly voice.

"By Jove! what a beautiful girl. Too handsome for salvation,—in this form."

Another voice made answer, "Her heart's not in it. This occupation won't last her long. Watch her."

And Tryphosa, with all her happy ardour checked, watched also. She did not see so much as the men saw,—how could she, pure soul?—but she noticed that as Tryphena sang her eyes strayed round the circle. She was not absorbed in her task, but quite sensible of many admiring glances cast towards her. With a sort of resentful indignation of their watchful speculations Tryphosa turned to the two men behind her.

"Buy a *Cry*, sir?"

The younger man looked at her and started perceptibly. The older man placed some coppers in her hand and signed away the paper she offered.

"She is my sister, sir," she said with a deep blush rising. It was as if she was constrained to acknowledge she had heard their conversation. Then she passed on.

By and by came the period for soliciting contributions. A *War Cry* was laid down in the centre of the circle and pennies and halfpennies were tossed in from outside and heaped upon this informal altar.

Tryphena, having finished her solo, walked back calmly to a place she selected in the throng. The young man who had taken notice of her beauty stood near that spot. She cast a full and comprehensive glance towards him as she approached, and she knew that he did not belong to that uncouth and uncultured throng. What had arrested him here? As the collector's requests for contributions grew more urgent the girl inclined her head to those nearest her and solicited

pence. What more natural than for her to turn to the gentlemanly spectator? "And you, sir?" she said holding out her white hand in a calm way, a way so far removed from shyness and yet certainly not bold. Still looking at her intently he placed a silver coin in her hand. Tryphena advanced and laid the money on the paper, and the collectors noting the zeal of her recruit smiled approval on her contribution.

#### IV.

It was a chilly night. A gusty October evening with squalls of cold rain at intervals,—a night when macintoshes were imperative and umbrellas impossible. The more zealous soldiers had gone out into the highways, unmindful of any inclement elements, and had compelled or persuaded many to come in. Tryphosa had in wind and storm fulfilled her allotted task, and her *Cries* being all disposed of, she carried a pocket weighty with pence to the spot where she expected to meet her sister. She had not seen her this week, for all her leisure time had been occupied by her soldierly duties, and she hungered for the sight of the beloved sister and waited with a heart warm with affection. The stragglers going to the meeting passed her and swept into the building near at hand, but still Tryphena did not come. The Hallelujah Lasses spoke to the patient watcher as they passed, giving her the time and bidding her not to tarry. She took no heed of their admonitions and remained with her eyes fixed intently on the darkness at the end of the street. How the wind roared! how the lamps flickered! Down came the rain once more and the girl sought shelter on a friendly doorstep. The rain ceased, and overhead she could see a momentary rift in the cloud and one little star shining. A blare of brass instruments was swept towards her from the adjacent building. Mechanically and in an undertone she joined in the chorus of the hymn,

We sound aloud the jubilee,  
Mercy's free, mercy's free !

She strained her eyes till they ached. Tryphena had never been so late before. Surely two figures paused under the farthest gas-lamp,—two figures, not one. Then the angry wind swept Tryphosa's wet bonnet-strings across her eyes and a moment's stinging pain ensued. The tears blinded her ; when she looked about her again the dear sister was close at hand, approaching solitary.

"It was you then,—under the gas-lamp," said Tryphosa breathless, "and one one with you !"

The eyes of the truthful ancestress looked steadily into Tryphosa's own. "Some one with me ! Why, you're dreaming."

And the Twin who had the soul of the ancestress which never lied, thought that the night shadows and the driving rain had deceived her with false shapes.

The good work within the building went merrily forward that night ; many declared their salvation, and half-a-dozen sitting on the Penitent Form bewailed their earlier state of darkness and peril. Tryphena also stood up and gave evidence of righteousness, testifying in a way that stirred all hearts ; and the worshippers, poor working men and women, unacquainted with any subtle influence of culture and refinement, were yet moved to tears and spiritual anguish by the sight of the beautiful creature, with the face of an angel, who had come among them to seal their convictions. With loud accord the throng of yearning humanity gave voice to a rapturous chorus of praise and thanksgiving. Overcome with emotion, with eyes shining with that strange spiritual light which too often forebodes fanaticism, Tryphosa passed silently from the building and went home. Her heart was too full to hold human intercourse, and yet she had not testified to any moving grace. Tryphena, calm and collected, waited to receive

the adulation of the officers, for praise and honour it was to her to be marked out in that large assembly. A young captain, devout in good works, escorted the girl home through the stormy night and parted with her on the doorstep of the shop with the customary fervent blessing, which was not altogether impersonal.

A day or two later the end came,—the end of this girl's services to salvation. The lass who stood up high for promotion after such short service disappeared. The beautiful Tryphena came no more to the gatherings, and was lost sight of in the great outside world.

The captain sought out Tryphena and questioned her closely in a peremptory manner. Over and beyond the interests of the Army he had a private concern at heart. The girl quivered and trembled beneath the rough touch laid on her heart-strings. How could she bear this suspicion of evil which like a dark cloud now encompassed the missing one ?

They knew nothing of Tryphena at the shop where she had served. She had given a week's notice and had gone away alone in a cab, taking all her small possessions with her. A terrible presentiment,—a doubt she had never taken out and looked at fairly—rose up in the troubled sister's mind. Tryphena had asked for no money for a long time, and once, a few weeks back, when Tryphosa had borrowed her sister's Bible a play-bill had discovered itself therein,—a play-bill of recent date. And then the dream, or vision of Tryphena parting with a man beneath the gas-lamp,—was it a reality after all ? With a stricken soul the Salvation Lass went about her daily tasks and waited, praying without ceasing. There was no one to help her. Such things had happened before in the Army, and the gap filled up and the deserter was speedily forgotten. Tryphena had gone away willingly, and by and by she might appear again. She had tired of it all, as she had tired of

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other things before. To her there was no law of worthiness and perfection incumbent on her, if there was no advantage in it. Something better in the way of occupation, some yet greater prominence had presented itself, and doubtless Tryphena, true to her nature, had gone after it. She would write or come again in due time. So the unhappy sister, making the best of the fallible points she knew so well, endeavoured to shield herself from the worst doubt of all.

## V

It was spring-time and Hyde Park was joyous in sunshine and renewed vernal life. A gay crowd was gathered together this forenoon, along the foot-way of Rotten Row, the majority more concerned with each other's appearance than interested in the display of hyacinths and budding trees. Leaders of fashion showed the marvellous ways of dress to women of less social importance, apt disciples in this direction, and the wave of gossip and scandal gathered and broke with its usual destructive force.

A Salvationist Lass, intent on some errand of mercy, had found this the shortest road to her destination. She threaded her way through the fashionable crowd, attracting little notice beyond an occasional indulgent smile. Yet she was very delicate and refined in appearance, tall and slender, with an almost ethereal fragility. There was a far-away unreal look in her eyes, which seemed to rest always beyond the throng, but something singularly attractive about the tender curves of her lips.

At the end of the Row a yet denser crowd was packed on chairs or stood about in friendly chat. Still she pressed forward, passing between them all without pausing to glance at any. Her mission was not here, or to any such as these. She breathed more freely as she came out of the press and paused a moment to draw a strong

sigh. Her work was heavy, and spiritual exhaustion as well as bodily had crept over her. A year had gone by, and no voice of kith or kin had spoken to her.

She shaded her eyes from the too dazzling sun as she stood, about to cross the road, at Apsley House. As she paused a prancing pair of black horses and a well-appointed victoria clattered over the stones at the corner. She stood so near that the dust from the wheels soiled her dress. Mechanically her eyes fell upon the occupant of the carriage,—a beautiful girl wearing an air of calm pride. The beautiful girl's glance swept over the passers by, travelled on slowly and met the wild awakened look of the Salvation Lass,—the look of one who sees visions and dreams dreams. They might have touched each other at that momentary exchange of looks, but the lady's carriage passed on and her drooping parasol lowered a moment over her stately head. Then the other fell fainting in the sunshine.

## VI.

MORE years went by and Tryphosa's heart and hand never slacked in the work she had chosen. Her pity and labour were given to sinners, to sinners of the worst sort. She practised daily works of atonement for the sins of others,—for the sins of one other now far removed from her. Self-sacrifice, the perilous rock of many creeds, was in all her thoughts and actions. She dwelt upon the possibility of expiation and atonement for another till the idea became fatally fixed. Hereunto she was called, and sooner or later the allotted task would be clearly pointed out. Thus, in the exaltation of her more spiritual moods, her reason was confounded and her mind unhinged by a mystical belief. A religious martyrdom might crown her life and prove an act of reparation for another. Alas! alas! So far however she had kept her hold of life's sad realities. When physical suffer-

ing or material wants called out for practical assistance she was ready to give help. And this poor saint seemed to draw towards her many broken-hearted and sorrowful souls, comforting them with the promise of eternal rest. None should ever be cast out, none should be rejected from grace. Was not that consolation and assurance the very foundation and bulwark of salvation?

For three successive nights Tryphosa had waited and watched outside a squalid lodging-house in the worst part of Westminster. She had waited patiently for the regular appearance of a woman, young so far as could be judged from her gait and figure, yet a woman who went down nightly to the Embankment. She came again and yet again, and watched the black shining waters under the intense starlight of a wintry sky. Not nights for any loiterers were these. And each time this tall and stately creature, shrouded in an old shawl, went away with a rapid step and a mind made up,—not that night, no, not that night! Then Tryphosa would creep home silently to her own resting-place.

But the last hope had fled, and now, with frost in the air and snow upon the ground, the grisly King beckoned down to the water's edge once more. Tryphosa had seen the woman turned from her lodgings, and she knew what would happen next, what had happened in such cases before. Now the creature without hope sat upon a deserted bench with her poor clothing all huddled around her. She was waiting, calm and still, till all footsteps near her died away. When that happened she would steal along the wall unobserved, and lose herself for evermore in a still greater silence. Tryphosa knew. Had she not seen this sort of thing at this spot before? Her intuition and sympathy told her that the woman, who had settled herself quietly to an apparent rest, was waiting with wide-eyed misery, waiting with all her life like a moving slide passing before her in those last heart-beats of anguish.

The big clock struck one, and the Salvation Lass moved backwards and forwards to keep herself warm and the woman was conscious of her presence. The big clock struck two, and a policeman on his beat paused to glance at the pair of women. He recognised the situation instantly and moved away, trusting in that faithful silent sentinel. And all the time Tryphosa waited she nerved herself for her task, the fire of zeal burning hot within her. The fierce enthusiasm of faith and longing set her pulses beating fast.

On the strike of three the woman on the bench stirred and drew the old shawl around her. The Salvation Lass had walked a little further off than before. The woman watched her stealthily. It was a black night and the gas lamps were far apart. Noiselessly she slipped to her feet and passed like a shade to the wall which hid the river. She laid hold of the stone work with one hand, as if to steady herself, and then she dropped the shawl. On the other side it would be very cold, but she would need no covering. And the woman who had loved comfort and good days all her life, shivered as she thought of the depths. That pause was long enough to save her. A hand touched her, drew her back,—a wasted hand with very little strength in it. But the touch of it was like fire, and the startled woman shuddered.

"Let me go,—let me go!" she said hoarsely.

Tryphosa recoiled. This was more than she had expected. "Tis you—at last—at last!" she cried in a voice that rang with triumphant joy. And in the gloom the sinner and the saint knew the bond of sisterhood between them.

"It is you, Phosa," sighed the woman, "here!"

"God has spared me for your salvation," cried the other one, and falling to her knees on the snowy pavement she offered up a wild rhapsody of praise. Tryphena turned away.

"I don't want to live to be pointed at. I won't be saved to take the lowest place."

"Repent—repent!" said Tryphosa still on her knees, clinging to her sister's skirt. "There is yet time."

"No, no, I do not repent. I will not creep upon my knees. There is no place for me in this world. Let me see the end of it."

Tryphosa lifted herself from the ground. "Die in sin? No, no!" She paused as if to gather her strength of utterance. "You need not creep upon your knees, but you shall be saved. I will redeem your soul."

The light of fanaticism flamed in her eyes. The sacrifice was close at hand. She lifted her hands to the sky, gazing upwards as if to fathom some kingdom of glory. "Lord, I give her to Thee. She shall take my place."

Then the woman who had sought to die, claiming extinction as a right of misery, looked at her sister, not in any way comprehending; the language she heard had grown utterly strange to her.

Tryphosa, with a haste unknown to her, flung off her Army jacket with its badge, and removing her bonnet, placed it on her sister's bare head.

"We are alike,—there's very few

can tell us apart when we're dressed the same. I'm readier to die than you. The Lord will promote me to glory,—greater love hath no one than this."

In such disconnected sentences she went on as she stripped herself of all Army tokens. Then she picked up the ragged shawl from the ground and wound it closely about her own form. Before Tryphena had clearly comprehended her intent, she kissed her, gave a loud clear shout, *Salvation!* and disappeared. The policeman hearing that loud cry came back quickly and found the girl in the Salvationist bonnet shuddering as she looked over the wall into the abyss.

"Too late, my lass, were you? Ay, they're very cunning when they're set on it. 'Tis a pity!" And with rough sympathy he lifted the girl's jacket from the ground and placed it on her shoulders.

And the woman went away as if cleansed of her sins, and the leaders recognised her only as Tryphosa. And the years went by and she found favour with the elders as a wise virgin whose light burned brightly. But there was one "promotion to glory" which never reached the knowledge of the Army.

H. M.

## THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.

GERMANY honours Sedan Day, and France celebrates the glorification of destruction on the 14th of July; but England has no events in her history which she yearly commemorates, for Guy Fawkes' day, whatever it may have been once, has now sunk into a vulgarity and a nuisance. It is quite different, however, with the great English-speaking nation across the Atlantic. The fondness for national celebrations among the people of the United States may be due to their earlier adoption of democratic institutions, or to their close intercourse with France in the days of political alliance in the last century and of social and artistic imitation in the latter half of this, or again to the large mixture of other elements than English in the population; but whatever the cause, it certainly is a fact that the American delights in public ceremonial as much as an Englishman dislikes it. The Fourth of July Orations have passed into a proverb; and as the memories of the struggle with England have grown fainter, a new national festival has sprung up in Decoration Day, on which North and South unite to honour the graves of their dead soldiers, and to preserve the memories of the great Civil War. It is another commemoration of that terrible struggle, of a somewhat different kind, at which we happened to be present this year, and which seemed to us characteristic enough to be worth description, especially as to the majority of Englishmen probably, as to ourselves, it will be quite unfamiliar.

The Grand Army of the Republic is an association which was founded in 1866, a year after the close of the war; its ranks are open to all those who served under the Federal flag and who received an honourable dis-

charge. It took its rise in Illinois, a State which had played a most prominent part in the struggle, which had sent Lincoln to the White House, and which first appreciated the merits of Grant as a general. Its objects were to perpetuate those ties of friendship which had been formed in the smoke of battle, and to secure the interest of those who had suffered for the Union, while as regards the State it was intended to serve as a school of patriotism for the nation, by reminding the coming generation of the "brave days of old." Like everything else in the States, it has not been unaffected by the influence of the "politicians." Mr. Bret Harte dramatically sets forth this, and other objections to the movement, in his charming poem of *The Old Major Explains*.

And then for an old man like me, it's not  
exactly right  
This kind of playing soldier with no enemy  
in sight.  
The Union,—that was well enough way up  
to Sixty-Six,  
But this Re-Union,—maybe now it's mixed  
with politics.

But the memories of Spottsylvania are too much for the old man's scruples, and he yields to the invitation to meet his comrades once more; and as in the poem, so in real life, sentiment has triumphed over criticism, and the organisation has steadily increased in numbers till the present time. At the recent meeting in Detroit in the first week of August, it was reported that four hundred and fifty thousand veterans were now enrolled in its Posts, as the various lodges are called. Of course only a small portion of these come to any one gathering; but this year, as being the Silver Anniversary of the foundation of the order, a special effort was made, and it was

estimated that more than fifty thousand veterans met in the great commercial city of Michigan.

Detroit is well adapted for such a gathering. It is very spacious for a city of two hundred and fifty thousand people, even in the great West where cities are laid out on the grand scale, and owing to a happy inspiration on the part of its designer, who also laid out the "magnificent distances" of Washington, it succeeds in attaining regularity of plan without that deadly uniformity of streets at right angles which makes Chicago as maddening as a gigantic draught-board. The centre of the city at Detroit is a small park from which the avenues diverge like the spokes of a wheel, while all round these the great mass of rectangularly arranged streets fits closely in. The profusion of trees and the broad Detroit river, which is the outlet to the Great Lakes, make the place as beautiful as a place can be in which every existing building has been put up within fifty years on an almost level plain. It is a point of honour in the States for each city to outvie its neighbours and rivals in its municipal displays; and public and private liberality in Detroit had subscribed nearly £30,000 for the reception of the Grand Army. This was of course independent of the sums expended by individuals on the decorations of their own houses; these were carried out on the most lavish scale, so far as size at least was concerned, though there was a curious lack of variety in the combinations of star-spangled banners or in the portraits of favourite captains. Among the last it was clear that Grant's career as a politician had somewhat injured his popularity as compared to that of Sherman or Sheridan, while Meade, the solid sensible soldier who won the decisive battle of Gettysburg, was hardly commemorated once; this is only one of many facts which seemed to show how little the real history of the great struggle had remained in the public memory. There could be no doubt

that in Detroit the visit of the Army was popular. Every house on the main streets was gaily decorated, and most of those on the side streets, while triumphal arches were erected at the most important points. Many of the fifty thousand veterans were accommodated in private houses, but for those who could not be so entertained, big camps were formed by the city; in one of the public grounds twelve thousand men of the Grand Army revived their experiences of war by sleeping under canvas. The streets during the whole week were extraordinarily gay, for besides the veterans it was estimated that one hundred and fifty thousand visitors were in the town, so that the population was nearly doubled. Almost every man was wearing a decoration of some kind, for the American carries out his fondness for ceremonial thoroughly. Besides the ordinary bronze medal of the Grand Army, and the cross of the Loyal Legion (which is worn only by ex-officers), there were endless ribbon badges, marking the Post to which a man belonged, his state, his position on the committee of reception or as the representative of some special interest. These marks were certainly picturesque, and added colour to the plain dark-blue brass-buttoned dress which is worn by the veterans, and which was the old undress uniform of the war-time; but to a European eye they rather lacked the simplicity proper to military decorations, and were too suggestive of the badges of Foresters' Lodges or of Good Templar Societies. An exception must be made for the cross of the Loyal Legion, which is as pretty as it is honourable, and is recognised as a badge of distinguished service in the highest military circles of Europe.

The crowds were everywhere good-humoured and well behaved; indeed their patience and order were most striking to a visitor. Drunkenness was extraordinarily rare; we only saw one drunken veteran in four days. In fact the teetotal zeal of some of the

good people of Detroit seemed quite unnecessary; for a determined effort had been made by a small number of fanatics to have all intoxicating liquors excluded from the entertainment of the Army; one obscure chapel had gone so far as to issue its protest,—with almost Papal arrogance, “in the name of Jesus Christ and more than one thousand Christian young men of Detroit.”

Certainly it is in a gathering of this kind that an Englishman can best learn what a Democratic country means. The absolute freedom from formality in all arrangements was a curious contrast to our home ceremonials. There were no cordons of policemen and officials to secure the privacy of distinguished guests or managing committees; the crowd went wherever it pleased, and a stranger could pass unchallenged into the very head-quarters of the Grand Army, and be admitted, if he chose, to an interview with the commander-in-chief himself. The halls of the great hotels on the first day of the gathering were extraordinary sights, filled as they were with hurrying committee-men, with bands playing, with ever fresh arrivals of veterans; while amid the confusion old friends recognised each other, and strangers were introduced, in an atmosphere thick with cigar smoke and good fellowship.

The gathering itself lasted four days, but it was only on the first two that there was much of the nature of public celebration. On the first day there was the great procession, which forms the chief feature of the proceedings. The Grand Army then is formally reviewed by its commander as it marches past; but in order to give others a share in the sight, the march is continued through some of the main streets of the town. On this occasion the march was made too long, for the veterans were kept moving for more than two hours, without reckoning the time spent in mustering and waiting to start. This was a severe strain, on a hot August day, for men of whom

the youngest was well into middle age; and hence a very considerable number did not march at all, or fell out after saluting the commander-in-chief. But the procession was still very imposing. Of course the numbers in it were most variously estimated by rival newspapers. We can only say that it was more than four hours between the passage under our window of the first and the last ranks; and that after the first half-hour the halts were very rare and very short. The Ohio men especially made a gallant show; for nearly forty minutes the representatives of the Buck-Eye State were defiling by, and it seemed as if the line of their yellow flags would never end. It was evident that the native State of Grant, of Sherman, and of Sheridan, was very loyal to the cause which they had led to victory.

The procession at once was and was not very imposing. In all essentials it was a most striking sight; for most of the regiments marched exceedingly well, and as a rule went by with lines well locked up and a firm step which would not have discredited the Regulars of any army in Europe. And even to a visitor it was a most striking thought that these men, after seeing as much and as hard fighting as any soldiers of our time, had returned into civil society and settled down as peaceful citizens. There had been nothing quite like it in history since Cromwell's Ironsides broke themselves up and returned to give bone and sinew to English life. Nor were there lacking memorials to aid the mind in realising where these men had been, and what they had seen. Many Posts carried by the old battle-flags of their former regiments, with the bullet-rent rags hardly clinging to the pole. One relic was especially interesting; before the Wisconsin men was carried the stuffed form of the famous eagle “Old Abe,” which attached itself closely to one of the regiments early in the war and went unharmed through all the hard fighting with the soldiers of the Badger State, and which



was as cherished a comrade as the famous dog of the Fusiliers in the English army. The one hundred and twenty bands too, which were scattered at intervals through the procession, played well-known war-tunes, and the veterans stepped out more briskly than ever to the familiar strains of *Marching through Georgia*, or *Shouting the Battle-Cry of Freedom*.

But there were other elements in the procession which were less satisfactory. In the first place Democracy has its drawbacks from the point of view of spectacular effect. Instead of the close-kept lines of an English crowd, with mounted policemen at intervals, and even the dogs well in order, we had spectators who went pretty much where they pleased; they not only crossed the road freely in the spaces between the detachments, but, where the ranks were at all loose, actually went right through the detachments themselves. And the marching was at times very loose and slovenly; it was strange that any able-bodied men who had once fought so well, should now march so badly. But it was the lack of organisation which chiefly impaired the impressiveness of the sight. A procession, especially of dark uniforms, depends for its effect on its regularity. The proper depth of front was twelve; but the men went by in lines of every variety of strength, and sometimes even in open order,—a formation in which the best-drilled troops must be disappointing to the eye.

This lack of order was after all but a small matter. It is impossible to combine the maximum of popular enjoyment with perfect formality, or to insure uniformity of organisation in men gathered from every corner of a continent; and if the spectacle suffered in itself from being somewhat broken up, at all events more could enjoy it. What was more unfortunate was the lack of seriousness with which the crowd, and even the veterans themselves, seemed to regard the whole business. The

bands were the worst offenders in this respect. Their uniforms often looked like the cast-off wardrobe of a third-rate circus company; every army in Europe was, we will not say imitated, but parodied. There were bear-skin caps, cuirassier helmets, Zouave shakoes and costumes, and too many of them untidy and dirty. And while, as has been said, the bands often gave the real war-music, they still oftener indulged themselves in the marches of second-rate modern operas to the neglect of the historic tunes. Probably no single song did more for the Union Cause than *John Brown's Body*; yet it was not played once,—at any rate in our hearing.

And the veterans too seemed disposed at times to turn the whole affair into a jest. One Illinois Post went by under red, white and blue umbrellas, intended to represent the Star-Spangled Banner, though they had not even troubled themselves to get the number of the stars of the States right; others led along with them negroes in particoloured dresses, to serve them with water; women and girls in fancy costumes were also to be seen in the ranks. Such shows would be in place in Barnum's processions; but in a national celebration they struck a jarring note. And on the whole there was very little effort to bring out the historic significance of the scene. The old war-flags have been mentioned, and some of the States carried their peculiar emblems; the Minnesota men for example wore wheatears, the Kansas men sunflowers, the Texas men a great pair of horns, with the ridiculous inscription, *We never draw in our horns; they are too long*. But the Massachusetts men, who carried before each Post the banner of their State, were quite exceptional. Flags there were in plenty; but they were as a rule the trumpery pennons of individuals, or the brand-new gaudy banners of the different Posts, and not in the least historical or important. Some of our American friends did not seem to

notice anything wrong; to us the turning of the greatest war of modern times into an occasion for second-rate theatrical display was painful, and seemed to indicate something wanting in the nation's sense of its own dignity.

The great procession was followed in the evening by a series of meetings, which were addressed by ex-President Hayes (who had marched that day as a simple "comrade" in the ranks), the Secretary of War, and other notabilities. This year's gathering was saddened by the fact that since the previous August two more of the great captains of the Union had passed away; Sherman and Admiral Porter had died within a few days of each other, and now there is hardly a Northern general of importance left. The speaking was of a very ordinary character, good, but in no way proving the superiority of American to English oratory which Mr. Bryce assumes as a fact. There were two or three notes in the speeches which seemed unfortunate. One was the tendency to "talk tall." It is good neither for oratory nor for edification to tell an audience, as one of the speakers did, that the "Americans now were the best and noblest generation who had ever existed in that or any other land." Another was the injustice of attitude to the South. It is perhaps too much as yet to ask a Northern orator to drop the term "rebels"; but the fact might be recognised that Lee and Jackson were foes worthy of any man's steel, and that a full share of the honours of the war belonged to the conquered. There was a good deal too much of the "all-victorious" army of the Union; and even an old Northern sympathiser could not fail to remember that Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg were great names as well as Gettysburg and Appomatox. In short, the speeches were marked throughout by a tendency to sacrifice fact to sentiment; and it is not surprising if the present generation fail to know the true story of the

war, when its survivors prefer well-sounding generalities to plain straightforward reference to its actual facts, which it might be thought full enough of the lessons of heroism and patience to satisfy any orator. These gatherings lose the greater part of their value if they are not a living memorial to the younger generation that patriotism means blood and tears as well as the triumphant prosperity of the Union.

The last three days of the gathering were of a much less formal character, so far as concerned the great majority of the veterans, although on the second day there was a great free picnic provided by the city, and a grand display of fireworks. It was not unpleasant to English vanity to find that, in order to make these "the greatest show ever seen on either side of the Atlantic," recourse was had to the old country and to the well-known name of Pain. But picnics and fireworks are much the same all the world over, and the real interest of the gathering now centered in the informal reunions of the old regiments, and in the evening "camp-fires." There were two hundred of the former on the Wednesday alone. This reknitting of old friendships would almost by itself justify all the trouble and expense of these festivities; and certainly the veterans themselves think so. "Camp-fires" are meetings of a very informal character, in which the old war-songs are sung, and any soldier may relate his experiences. Unfortunately we could not attend any of them, but to judge by the war-stories of which the Detroit papers were full they must have been most delightful. It was, however, a shock to one's feelings to find them held in some of the principal churches of the city, though not in those of the Roman or the Anglican communions.

But the Grand Army is a great business organisation, and its officers had much to do besides reviving old memories. There was first of all the important question to settle of the

gathering-place for next year. This became almost a trial of strength between the older and the new States, for the two candidates were Washington and Lincoln (in Nebraska); even the names were significant, as there is undoubtedly a strong feeling in the West that Lincoln is to displace the first President as the national hero. On this occasion, however, the old city triumphed, though by a narrow majority of less than forty out of over seven hundred votes. The fact that Washington lay within easy reach of the most important battle-fields of the war undoubtedly decided the matter in its favour. There was much other formal business to discuss as to the position and the duties of the Grand Army; but the only other question of importance was whether black men and white should unite in the same Posts in the Southern States. A great number of Northern soldiers went after the war into the territory of the Confederacy, and it was very striking and significant to find the majority of them absolutely refusing to be now united with their coloured brethren-in-arms. The commander-in-chief in his report recommended that their prejudices should be recognised, and that separate Posts should be formed for white and for negro soldiers; but this recommendation was overruled, and it was decided by the delegates that all the soldiers of the Union should be on an equality, whatever their colour. It remains to be seen whether the Grand Army men of the South will carry out their threat, and secede from the organisation.

The gathering was universally pronounced to be the most successful that had been held; and it is certain that all who took part in it spent a most delightful week. But it must be added that there is in many quarters in the States a strong feeling against the Grand Army.

It is attacked mainly on two grounds, first as being a great political engine, and secondly as tending to keep alive the breach between North and South.

There is much to be said for both these objections, though they seem directed rather against the accidents than the essence of the organisation. As to the first, there is no doubt (the Americans themselves go out of their way to tell you of it) that under cover of honouring the veterans of the war, a great amount of political corruption has been carried on. The men who fought for the Union deserve all honour; but it is a scandal that now, after twenty-five years, the amount of pensions paid is heavier than it ever was, and (incredible as it may seem) is actually greater in amount than the sum expended by any of the great nations of Europe on its standing army; the annual outlay reaches nearly £2,000,000 in the one State of Michigan alone. Unfortunately this has been made a party question. A portion of the Democrat Press broadly insinuates that the Grand Army of the Republic is simply an instrument to enable the Republican party to get at Uncle Sam's pockets. On the other hand the Republicans retort, as we heard one of their candidates for the Presidency say at Detroit, that "those who now attack the pensions were during the war either in hiding or in Canada." It is to the credit of the Grand Army that at this last gathering it passed a resolution against using its organisation for political purposes; and speaking as strangers, we can only say that, unless we have been peculiarly fortunate in the Grand Army men we have met (and they were many and of all ranks), it is a libel on the very great majority of them to accuse them of self-seeking either for themselves or their party.

As for the second objection, that the feud with the South is kept alive by such celebrations, it does not seem necessary that this should be so. Both sides (with a very few exceptions) now rejoice in the issue of the war; it should surely be possible to commemorate without bitterness the exploits of their own heroes, while doing full justice to the bravery and the

cause of the other side. A generation or two will bring a time when they will be able to unite even more closely; for history will certainly repeat itself in America, and the granddaughters of the men who fought in the trenches at Vicksburg and died in the "death-angle" at Spottsylvania, will sing sympathetically the *Bonnie Blue Flag*, and *Dixie's Land*, just as, one hundred years before in Great Britain, Bonnie Prince Charlie and Bonnie Dundee became the heroes of Scotch lassies whose grandfathers had never mentioned their names without a prayer that was very like a curse.

And, if foreigners may speak on the matter, the advantages of the Grand Army celebration are obvious. Cruel as the American War was, and terrible as were the losses it involved, it yet brought out in a way, unsuspected even by themselves, the true fibre of the American nation. During this century they had enjoyed a career of uninterrupted prosperity, chequered only by an indecisive war with England, and a successful but not very glorious war with Mexico. Suddenly, by the great struggle for the Union,

they were brought for the time into the ranks of military nations, and the world learned that the new English fighting blood was no degenerate scion of the old. We may condemn war as much as we will, but it certainly brings the poetry into the history of a nation; and it may be said further that a nation which ceases to know how to fight, will soon cease to know how to prosper. There is no danger in America of the peaceful virtues which bring success being neglected; there is some danger (its own citizens think) of the coming generation having too easy a life owing to their great material prosperity. So success may well be wished to the Grand Army in its endeavour to keep green the memory of those who, in the words of the gifted writer whom we have lately lost, and who perhaps more than any other man represented the noblest feelings of the North during the war,

Whose faith an' truth  
On War's red techstone rang true metal,  
Who ventured life an' love an' youth  
For the gret prize o' death in battle.

## IN PRAISE OF MOPS.

THE varieties to be found in the character of dogs have always appeared to us a most interesting study. What degrees of morality, intelligence, self-control do we not observe in their different families, from that narrow and uncertain-tempered specialist, the greyhound, to the universally popular and trusty fox-terrier whom you can "do anything with," as the saying is! This axiom means in particular that the habitual companion of so many Englishmen is, like that equally respectable creature the retriever, susceptible of discipline to no ordinary degree. Many a humane man has held up a terrier of the fox or bull type and beaten the animal as he loved it, and till his arm ached. Nor is it to be supposed that such a dog (whom we have seen struggle after an angry swan in mid-stream and triumphantly pull its tail feathers out) is exactly afraid to retaliate. The same may be said of the curly black brute (capable of carrying a good-sized child in his mouth) whom the keeper chastises to an accompaniment of "Ah! Ratt-ell you breeute! Wood-jerrr!" There are dogs of course, such as the wolf-hound that killed the unfortunate Frenchman the other day, that one would hesitate to chastise for the reason that Kingsley gives, in respect of the hero of his famous ballad:

The clerk that should beat that little  
Baltung,  
Would never sing mass again!

But as there are human natures, and those not always the worst, that do not take "punishment" kindly, so are there canine natures. The difference lies in a more refined sensibility both of soul and skin, and perhaps in a rarer, more feminine, if one may say so, and more spiritual nature.

Of such sort is the dog of whom we

write. Mops is one of those long-haired terriers whom to know is to love. No one could ever venture to beat him; he would probably go wild with fright or passion; as it is, he has hardly ever had a rough word spoken to him. Mops is nevertheless in ordinary circumstances as good as gold. If his sensitive temper be ever hurt, that is generally the fault of some person who has approached him either without proper introduction, or in a manner unsuited to his dignity. It is his habit to mark these occasions by pretending not to know his dearest friends, as they pass while he lies on his particular mat in the hall; or (in very extreme cases) by retiring to the housekeeper's room, much to the elation of that elderly dignitary, and growling from the low and cushioned window-sill at all who venture into his presence with overtures of friendship. There are points in his character which, in such an animal, it is hopeless to attempt to alter; but these are not the low or mischievous tricks of common dogs. He would scorn to run after a chicken or a sheep. Once he caught a very little rabbit on the front lawn and brought it with tender fondlings, yet half alive, to bed with him in his basket by the drawing-room fire, whence the horrified housemaid removed its corpse during his absence at dinner-time. He has also been confronted with a live rat with which, though exasperated by its want of humour, he for long endeavoured to play, till it bit him, when there was an abrupt end of the game, and of the rat. But Mops has decided instinctive notions about how certain things ought to be done, and equally decided aversions to certain people. To Mr. Buller, the local banker, who comes over to

dine regularly once a fortnight, he will never be more than severely civil. Mops' olfactory nerves have doubtless informed him of this gentleman's secret preference for fox-terriers, of which an adorable specimen is, at home, cherished in his bosom; but there possibly are other reasons.

We have not mentioned yet that Mops is as beautiful as the day, though this is not a very appropriate simile for one whose first appearance suggests a chaotic heap, or dancing cloud, of dusky hair through which now and then you catch the sparkle of two gleaming dark-brown eyes. Such he appears (for his affections and enthusiasms are unbounded, and his conduct, when pleased, of the frantic order) bounding or rather rippling down the stairs to fly into the arms of some welcome arrival, or (supreme joy!) to be taken out for a walk by the right person. At such a moment he will fling shrieking up and down the passage and over and under the furniture like an animated football; but when he stops dead short, or jumps upon your knees, shakes back his hair (which is really silver-gray, almost sky-blue in a strong light) with a prodigious effort, and grins ecstatically in your face, showing all his splendid teeth and preparing to inflict a vigorous kiss upon any unprotected feature, then indeed not the famed Peloton of Du Bellay,

*Faisant ne sçay quelle feste  
D'un gay braulement de teste,*

was more bewitching. Having mentioned the subject of teeth, we must add that one of the greatest pleasures of Mops' life is to "play at rats" with some competent human friend. This pastime (which is only allowed on the old leather settle in the smoking-room) consists chiefly in your trying to bury him in cushions, which should not be of expensive material. Then, if you have on an old velveteen coat, you may after a quarter of an hour come out of the game (which is deliriously exciting) with only a black and blue arm, for

which you will be amply repaid by the sight of Mops erect, breathless, and in admired disorder, with his large eyes gleaming like coals of fire at you through their hairy curtain, simply dying to begin again.

It has been suggested that he is not what is vulgarly called a "sporting dog," and that is so. Though he has no idea of being all things to all men, like many an honest dog of our acquaintance, he can be anything he pleases (for his genius is rich and versatile) with the people he really loves. We often summon him to come partridge-shooting with us in the fields close round the house. If we find him not in the gun-room, we are used to give a low whistle. Instantly a responsive and piercing bark echoes through the back premises,—Mops' demand addressed to domestics in general to open some door in his way; then another, and louder, on the first landing to announce his approach; then the noise of a carpet being dragged swiftly down the front stairs,—and there is Mops. But when we carelessly pick up our breechloader (and this we always do in his presence) as though it were merely a stick, his excitement boils over, and his yells are but gradually allayed as we get outside the front door.

Among the turnips and potatoes he presents the strangest figure, his long hair dragged with the wet, and his pointed nose and broad head (for once visible in their natural shape) peering up every now and again to see how we are getting on. Though a little slow among cover which often hides him from sight, he will quarter his ground, work backwards and forwards at a wave of the hand, and set at his game in the most orthodox manner. Mops, we do verily believe, would scent a cockchafer; and the only fault in his pointing (a thing beautiful to behold in its amateurish energy and self-consciousness) is that it almost as often indicates the presence of a thrush as of a partridge. As to passing by any living thing two inches high, he would



never dream of it. Then will he return, his little legs plastered with mud and shrunk to half their size, and his splendid hair hanging down like a Cretan goat's, exhausted but supremely happy, and retire to the pantry to be brushed. For Mops is strong, very strong; a dog of this size need be strong to carry about pounds of soil and quarts of water in his coat all day. The coat, by the way, conceals the bull neck of his species, and the long and solid trunk is supported by substantial quarters and fine stout forearms, so that the animal is by no means only ornamental.

As to his use,—well, let this sketch be finished with the story of Mops' only real adventure.

Two years ago his owner was acting as land-agent in a much disturbed district of Ireland, and lived in a large and ugly mansion where, to tell the honest truth, some one else ought to have been living. But as an agent our friend, Major D., did his duty and was detested by the peasantry. At an earlier stage they had "carded" one of his herds, drowned and strangled his calves, and even fired at one of his daughters (a lovely girl of sixteen) as she sat in loose array at her window one summer night. The bullet is in the window-frame to this day. Her father, who was annoyed, replied with a shot-gun and two heavy sawdust cartridges from a lower story, it is believed, to some effect. This however is by the way. Once a week, at the time referred to, Major D. used to drive into the neighbouring market-town, and on these occasions Mops (considerably to his relief) had never shown the slightest wish to accompany him further than the park-gate. One Wednesday, however,—it was a day or two after some ill-looking fellows had been seen hanging about the park,—Mops suddenly changed his mind. He was determined to go. This was embarrassing for the Major, who, apart from the trouble of looking after the dog, was afraid of risking so valuable an animal in a locality so distinguished

for what is called in Ireland "agrarian feeling." What was to be done?

Mops was locked up in an empty room which the children used for carpentering. His lamentable howls gradually subsided, and the rest of the household went about their business. Meanwhile Mops, as afterwards appeared, was doing a little carpentering on his own account. The door was a good sound door, but the floor beneath it was rather worn. It is a pity that no one could have seen his muscular little form as it lay there curled up on one side, the shaggy head savagely shaking as at each *scrunch* of his gnawing teeth fresh splinters of the deal board came away, and were swept aside by his little paws. It must have been hard work, harder than scraping at any rabbit-hole, but probably more delightful!

Nearly four hours had passed when an astonished domestic noticed and duly reported the alteration just executed by Mops. At that moment a small dark form might just have been discerned in the dusk of the evening scudding across the fields. This was Mops going to meet the Major,—and why in Heaven's name going at all?—and why going this way (the shortest cut as it happened) and not along the high road? Who shall peer into the workings of that strange little mind, or whatever we please to call it? It is certain that the point on the high road aimed at by Mops, consciously or unconsciously, was just about where an intelligent being would have expected the Major to be if he were walking home (as a rule he drove) at his usual hour, and it is equally certain that the Major was there. It does not appear moreover that Mops had the slightest doubt of this, or indeed exhibited the slightest hesitation as to what he meant to do, throughout the whole course of this, his one adventure. The Major was there, and nothing separated Mops from him but a high and rough stone wall, such stone walls as are peculiar to Ireland, where they have witnessed, and in their

mute way assisted, many ugly deeds. One of these in fact was in process when Mops arrived after a frantic struggle on the top of that wall.

Only twenty yards before reaching this point on the road the Major, who for reasons of his own had sent the carriage on and was walking home easily and circumspectly with a cigar in his mouth and a double-barrelled shot-gun under his arm, was suddenly confronted by a ragged and dirty masked ruffian who seemed to have dropped from the skies, but who soon proved his infernal origin by firing a heavy horse-pistol of antediluvian date right into the Major's face. As the heavy slugs whistled by the Major's ear, the dirty ruffian turned and fled down the deserted road into the gathering darkness.

Our friend, whose temper had been soured by the society of a disturbed neighbourhood, leant against the wall for a moment to steady himself and, allowing the proverbial forty yards' grace, deliberately let off two barrels into and about the stern of his retreating enemy. The man howled fearfully, but continued his course. The Major smiled, but the next moment cursed his folly with a mighty oath, and turned to grapple with a second opponent who, having waited his opportunity, sprang upon him while encumbered with his useless gun, and in the surprise bore him almost to the ground. What this second monster, who was also masked and unshaven, intended to do with the rude agricultural instrument, a sort of broken sickle, which he

produced at this moment, must be left to the imagination, for at this moment his attention was distracted.

With one of his curious little gurgling shrieks (like the bursting of a small musical instrument) the breathless Mops jumped, or fell rather, on all fours from the top of the wall. He did not spring at the man's calves, as dogs so often do; he had no time to think of that,—and in fact alighted a little higher up. The man wore moleskins, but what are moleskins to a little dog who makes a light afternoon meal of a bedroom door? Before any one of the three knew very clearly what had happened Mops had buried ten little teeth, each sharp as a new carving chisel, in the most fleshy part of the objectionable man's thigh. That was all, and that was quite enough. The Major, who has assisted (in the French sense) at many an Irish row, and seen a good deal of service in Egypt, confesses that he never heard a man swear as that ruffian did just before he was knocked down by the butt of the empty gun.

That night there was a good deal of coming and going of police. One of the individuals arrested will carry to the end of his life (which may be terminous with the end of his imprisonment) such a "pretty pattern of No. 5" that the Major has more than once expressed a wish "to send it to the makers," which of course is out of the question. The other carried away as lively a recollection of Mops as we shall any of us have, but for a different reason.

## OUR FIRST-BORN.

SHE came, an angel in our sight,  
 We took her as a gift from Heaven ;  
 She gave our home a new delight,  
 Our hearts' best love to her was given.

We harvested her every look,  
 And watched the wonder in her eyes ;  
 What constant loving care we took,  
 How patiently we soothed her cries.

Her lineaments how closely conned ;  
 Each parent sought the other there,  
 Foretelling her brunette or blonde,  
 With golden, or with raven hair.

Her tiny hands, her tiny feet,  
 A sculptor's dream, despair and aim ;  
 Did even Nature form more sweet  
 In frail perfection ever frame ?

Her name, a lily name of love,  
 To match her loveliness of life ;  
 Or some dear name one, now above,  
 Has left with fragrant memories rife.

We watched her grow from day to day,  
 More sweetly than a flower in June,  
 More swiftly than a leaf in May  
 Unfolds itself to greet the noon.

The mandate of her outstretched hands,  
 When first she knew a loving face,  
 Was mightier than a Queen's commands,  
 And dearer than her proffered grace.

Her keen delight, her artful ways,  
 When the faint light began to dawn,—  
 Great pictures fade, but memory stays  
 O'er little scenes that love has drawn.

Then came at length the crowning bliss ;  
 How oft, the babe upon her knee,  
 The mother sighed with yearning kiss,  
 "When will my darling speak to me !"

The first sweet sounds of broken speech,  
The first dear words that love inspires,  
How weak to these, the heart to reach,  
The music of a thousand lyres !

The eager questions, quaint replies,  
The awakening of the childish mind,  
The queries that perplex the wise,  
The griefs and joys that children find.

And so she grew still more and more,  
Our angel guest, our gift from Heaven,  
Our first-born child, for whom the store  
Of love waxed more, the more 'twas given.

Nor this alone ; but, like the cruise  
That fed of old the prophet guest,  
No danger now that we should lose  
The mated love of either breast.

Nay more,—by subtler creeds beguiled,  
We learnt with joy the simpler word,  
That he who tends a little child  
Is worshipping our blessed Lord.

## A ROMANCE OF CAIRO.

## I.

It is more than thirty years ago since Bevil Brereton arrived in Cairo and found there the fate or fortune of which this is the only complete or authentic history. The printed accounts are scrappy and misrepresent the main facts. I have collected, I think, all the newspaper paragraphs that appeared at the time on the subject. They are very meagre, and I believe an Alexandrian journal published in French was fined for mentioning the subject at all. The best account appeared in a Smyrna newspaper, but the next week's issue gave a contradiction of the story evidently "inspired." The whole business was hushed up by the authorities, and there are one or two incidents in it so romantic that I have found them received with incredulity when mentioned in conversation.

A visit to Egypt was, at the time of which I am writing, an uncommon thing, as it was a longer and costlier trip than it is now. Brereton was a man of leisure and money who had, or fancied he had, a weak lung. He had read *Eöthen*, and the *Crescent and the Cross*, and *Palm Leaves*, by Monckton Milnes, and he was drawn to take a passage on board a P. and O. steamer bound for Alexandria. He was the only passenger for Egypt; the other travellers were all booked for India.

He reached Cairo on a pleasant day in November, and was driven to Shephard's Hotel. He had seen a dioramic picture of its verandah in Albert Smith's Eastern entertainment, and a caricature by Richard Doyle of the new-comer, or griffin, in the clutches of Arab dragomans and donkey-boys was the last thing he had seen in a London print-shop. He found both the picture

of the place and the illustration of manners perfectly accurate. He had an introduction to the Consul and to the resident doctor, and was fortunate in making a few congenial acquaintances.

The first was Keith Grey, an artist; the other two, Sir David and Lady Brabazon, were breaking their homeward journey from India by lingering a couple of months in Egypt. The four kept together, had places at table next to each other, and planned excursions in company. Lady Brabazon, a clever and sympathetic woman, obtained Brereton's confidence early in the day, and discovered that he was in love; in this she was right. She decided that the course of his love was not running smoothly, and that this accounted for his visit to Egypt; in this she was wrong. Really, the girl he loved loved him in return. The match was suitable, and there was a chance of pretty Vera Cathcart coming with her parents to Egypt if they could make a rendezvous with a certain uncle who held a legal appointment in the Straits Settlements, and who thought of wintering in Cairo. One other point about Brereton Lady Brabazon discovered—he had no relations. He was an only son of an only son. He had no real estate, but money invested in Government and other securities. He often called himself "a waif and a stray," and spoke of buying a property and settling on his return. These are all the circumstances that are necessary to be known in order to explain the subsequent action or inaction of the little group of persons who were associated with Brereton in these days at Cairo.

Cairo in the last days of Said Pasha, and in the early days of Ismail, was very different from the Cairo of to-day. The large Europeanised quarter

which bears the name of the first Khedive did not exist. There was no lion-guarded bridge over the Nile: the palaces at Gezireh and Gizeh were not built; and the long avenues of lebbek trees that are now the favourite afternoon drives of residents were unplanted. The Muski was an Eastern bazaar, covered with a roof of matting and full of shops piled with carpets, brass-work, many-socketed lamps, and tables inlaid with mother-of-pearl; now it is a vulgar street, disfigured by the hideous dummies of advertising tailors. The Ezbekieh was the most Europeanised quarter, but there was no enclosed garden, only an open space shaded by tufts of umbrageous trees. Napoleon's head-quarters were still standing, and there was no straight Boulevard Mohammed Ali, but a network of narrow streets with windows latticed with *mushrebiyehs* of intricate tracery occupying all the space between Ezbekieh and the citadel. The Shubra Road was the one drive, the Avenue de Boulogne of Cairo, and this stretched from the railway station to the disused palace of Mohammed Ali. It was then on Sundays and Fridays the universal resort, and it is now, though unfrequented and unfashionable, a place full of fascination. The lights that glint on the gnarled and twisted sycamore stems, the thick canopy of leaves overhead, the fields to the right with their yokes of buffaloes, groups of turbaned peasants and flocks of goats perplex the artist by the variety of subjects they offer to his pencil. For when he has selected one and begun the outline of a solemn sheikh under his palm-tree, a line of swinging camels passes across the scene and lies down to be unladen, and he finds he has begun half unconsciously to sketch the arching necks and heavy trappings which seem all you want for a foreground, until a cluster of women, balancing water-pitchers on erect heads and bearing luscious stems of sugarcane, occupy the place and give a new motive to the picture. Brereton daily frequented this road, and found plea-

sure in watching the figures that travelled along it. But his interest was not that of a painter. Grey sketched, and was always looking out for sketches, but Bevil sought to guess the characters of the men who reclined languidly in their carriages, and to discern what manner of women they were whose faces were half hidden by muslin veils and blinded carriage windows.

This at least was the state of his mind one evening as he looked with more curiosity than was quite well-bred into a carriage that drove slowly past him down the sycamore avenue. He had seen the carriage in the same place on six successive evenings. Every Sunday and Friday for three weeks it had passed him at the same slow pace close to the same spot. The carriage was well-appointed, with a coronet and a crescent on the panel; the black horses were carefully groomed, the *syces*, or running footmen, wore jackets ablaze with gold, and the coachman was trim in European livery and red fez. On a bay horse which kept pace with the brougham was a tall gaunt eunuch, who never seemed to keep his eyes off the carriage. Neither did Brereton. Directly it entered the avenue it seemed to possess a peculiar fascination for him. It is impossible to say what first attracted his attention. There were a dozen other carriages on the road just like this one, but for some mysterious reason this was the only one he ever saw. If it be urged that this interest was inconsistent, improper, even unjustifiable, seeing that he was in love with Vera Cathcart, I can only say that experience proves every day that men and women do inconsistent, improper, and even unjustifiable things. He was young and idle and disposed to gather his rosebuds from any bush that showed pretty flowers. The occupant of the brougham, a lady with large soft eyes and cream-white forehead and mysterious veil of gauze, had magnetic power, and drew him every week to the Shubra Road, and bade



him pause near the particular sycamore under the shade of which she regularly stopped. At last, as was natural, the eunuch noticed his persistency and seemed annoyed thereby. At all events the carriage did not stop on the fourth Friday at all.

Now there was at that time among the many mendicants of Cairo a certain dwarf called Idris. He was a favourite, for he had a roguish smile and a funny appealing look, and he never pestered passengers for *baksheesh* but took a shake of the head for a negative, thereby contrasting with the blind Copt, and the man with a fin instead of a hand, and the legless cripple who dragged himself along the pavement, and all the ghastly shapes that seemed to have been emptied out of Milton's lazaret-house into the dusty road whenever and wherever the rich were gathered together. Brereton often gave a piastre to the dwarf and an acquaintance grew up between them. Perhaps the fact that Idris was also a pensioner of the mysterious lady secured the Englishman's interest in him. Every week the dwarf received an alms from the lady, who threw it from the carriage window just before she signalled the coachman to drive home. She usually stayed late, and on receiving her gift Idris made his salaams, and trotted off at a wonderful pace to his hut in the Fagalla. This programme had been punctually carried out for more than a month. No word had ever passed between the four actors in the odd drama, but they seemed obliged to go through the performance as if under a spell. They drove to the same place: they looked at each other for the same time with the same expression; but none of them save the dwarf who earned four piastres a week was the better for the performance.

## II.

Thus time passed until the end of January when Brereton received a letter from England. It announced that Miss Cathcart's father had heard that his brother, the Straits Settlements official, had resolved to stay in Cairo

No. 386.—VOL. LXV.

for three months, and so they were all coming out. They asked Brereton to take rooms for them at Shepherd's, and gave the date of their arrival. Some engagements, and a slight attack of fever, kept Bevil from going to the Shubra between the time of the arrival of the letter and the appearance of the Cathcarts. Vera had improved since he had seen her. She was just at the age when time seems busiest in enhancing a girl's attractions. The sea voyage and the frank enjoyment of new scenes and experiences had given vivacity to her eyes and a rose flush to her cheek—the outward signs of that sense of interest and happiness in life that glorifies beauty of colour and feature with that magical gift of the fairies we call by the name of Charm. Bevil and Vera had been neighbours in England and had enough home subjects in common to give them comparisons, allusions and reminiscences wherewithal to enhance the pleasure of foreign sight-seeing. When people can say often, "Is not that like so and so?" and "Does not that remind you of such and such a place?" they have links which make them enjoy each other's society. So it happened that for a short time the Eastern wife was forgotten, and the Western maid reigned in her stead. But Friday came, and the Rotten Row of Cairo had to be shown to the new-comers. With an odd feeling of uneasiness Bevil took his seat in the carriage with Vera and her mother. He pointed out the scenes and figures they passed: he was amusing on the gaudy dresses of the Levantine ladies, and the airs of the young natives who were just then beginning to coat themselves with French varnish; but he was looking all the time eagerly for the brougham. It was not there. They came to the sycamore he knew so well. There was neither carriage nor eunuch, but there was Idris the dwarf.

"What a quaint creature! He would do for the Hunchback in the *Arabian Nights*, or Nectabanus in *The Talisman*." Thirty years ago English ladies knew Scott.

The dwarf seeing the party were new-comers began his usual performance, a song and dance ending by balancing his staff on his chin. During these antics he managed to come close to Bevil and thrust a letter into his hand. This done he stopped quickly, and held his open palm for *baksheesh*. Directly he had received his piastres he disappeared, and as it was near sundown the party drove quickly homewards. Directly he was in his room Bevil locked the door and took out the note. It was in French and contained only these words: "You can save me from prison, and perhaps death, if you come to the garden of the Gem Palace to-morrow at ten o'clock."

The handwriting was disguised, and one word was misspelt, but Bevil never questioned the fact that it came from the veiled lady. He read it and reread it, utterly puzzled and weaving a dozen theories and romances. A servant roused him by knocking at his door and telling him the gong had sounded ten minutes ago. He dressed and went to dinner with rather inconsistent explanations of his dilatoriness.

Once with Vera Cathcart, however, the message was forgotten. He had been growing more and more attached to her during the recent days, and she had never looked more beautiful than on that evening. Brereton was coming to himself. The fancy that mystery and romance had woven had been torn to pieces, and had vanished to the limbo of vanities. When he said "good-night" that evening he felt that he loved Vera as he had never loved before, and that he must ask her to be his wife the next day. In a mood compact of hope and distrust he strolled out on the terrace and flung himself on a long chair. The moonlight was raining a shower of silver radiance over everything. The terrace and the knotted sycamores which rose in groups in the open space that then stretched in front of the hotel to the Ezbekieh, the high

white houses in the distance, the minaret circled with a coronet of light in honour of some festival—all blended to form a picture of repose which lulled the lover into a reverie. He was roused by the voices of two men who had taken their seats at a table close by. They spoke French and had talked some time before he heard them at all. Then he only had a vague impression that their words jarred on the subject of his thoughts. After a time he disentangled them from his own fancies and found how they recalled that which he had been pleased to forget. When he began to attach a meaning to their speech he naturally looked round to see what manner of men they were.

They were moustacied swarthy persons in Stambouli coats and fezes, men cut to the Egyptian official pattern and in no wise remarkable.

"I tell you," said one, "Effendina knows all. He is unwilling while the Delegate Ingleeze is here to make public scandal, but she has gone too far—"

"Which means," said the other, "that a certain friend of ours has set his heart on the Gem Palace. The scandals have been told by him and have lost nothing in the telling. The Pasha has determined that she shall drink a cup of coffee, and that he shall have three palaces instead of two. But let him take care; if she suspects him she will bring him down with her!"

"Impossible! What can she do? She is closely watched. The dwarf, Idris, whom she employs, is in the Pasha's pay—"

"And in everybody else's. I have known her for twenty years. She has never failed in any of her plans. There was Hassan Makmoud Pasha, who would not sell her the estate at Tanta. He died suddenly. There was the Greek Consul whose wife said she was looking old. He was recalled. There was Haig Agopian, the sharpest Armenian in Egypt. He refused to lend her the usual £5,000 on her diamonds after they had gone to Yusef Ben

Issachar the Jew to be reset. The bank had a run on it and was ruined in six months. All those who have thwarted her have been disgraced or have died. The last story is that she has declared it to be her ambition to have an Englishman at her feet."

"That would not be difficult I should think."

"Hush! speak lower."

The rest of the conversation was inaudible, but Bevil had heard enough to keep him from sleeping for some hours. He turned the matter over and over. Could the wicked princess be the veiled lady? The mention of the dwarf Idris seemed to favour the idea, but Idris was employed by many. Then the second clue came to his mind. The princess lived in the Gem Palace; so did the writer of the note he had received that evening. What could be the object of that summons? An obvious suggestion occurred to him. He wondered if a month ago he should have been fool enough to have followed up the adventure. The reply to the question was merged in other and pleasanter visions. What did he care for this Cairene Lucrezia Borgia and her plots? To-morrow he was to receive an answer which would decide his future from the sweetest lips in the world, and busy in imagining the smile that would accompany that answer, he fell asleep.

### III.

THE dream came true. The next day, in the orchard of palms hard by the hotel, he proposed and was accepted. The happiness of both seemed secure. In many ways, besides equality of age and fortune, the match seemed promising. Bevil and Vera were alike in tastes, and had many common interests. The isolation of Bevil's position had prevented him from being coloured and moulded by family life, and some softer traits were lacking. But marriage with a woman like Vera seemed likely to prevent the lovable side of his character from hardening.

The day was spent in making pleasant plans, and in those mutual questionings and discoveries of sympathy in the past which are new cords of attachment.

There was then little society in the modern sense in Cairo, and the engagement was not buzzed about and commented upon. Only two or three of the closer acquaintances of the Cathcarts were told of it and offered congratulations. In the afternoon the betrothed lovers drove out together and of course went to the Shubra Road. From the moment when he asked Vera to take a stroll in the palm orchard that morning Bevil had thought of nothing save his victorious love, but now the familiar avenue, the gnarled sycamores, the canopy of foliage, the alternating sun and shadow, and the groups of gay carriages (for it was Friday), brought back the other memory. They drove almost to the palace gate, then turned. A few yards from the usual spot he saw Idris. The dwarf evidently expected him to stop, and, he fancied, made a signal to him. The next moment he came up with the brougham and, perhaps by accident, perhaps at a sign to the native coachman, his own open victoria stopped. He looked instinctively into the window, and met the full gaze of the princess. She had the slightest film of muslin over her mouth and he saw her whole face. The eyes were blazing with passion, the nostrils distended, the teeth set, the great lips shut tight. As Bevil caught sight of the mask he instinctively put up his hand to shelter his Vera. The princess saw the protecting action. He scarcely knew whether it was fancy or fact, but he thought she made a counter gesture with her henna-tipped fingers as if drawing something from her bosom.

"What a strange face looked out of that carriage window," said Vera. "It reminded me of one of Le Brun's prints in the study at home."

"Our dwarf does not seem as

cheerful as usual to-night," said Bevil, shrinking from the subject.

"He looked keen enough as he passed us in the orchard of palms this morning," said Vera.

"Did he pass us there?" asked Bevil. "I did not see him."

"I thought you did not," said Vera archly.

## IV.

THE next day there were unmistakable signs of something wrong at the hotel. The waiters were clustered in groups in the passage, not marshalled at their posts. The manager, usually oiled and curled, was standing on the terrace running his hands wildly through his hair. Two janissaries from the English Consulate were stationed at the door, and two more were standing sentry over a line of native servants who were drawn up in the garden. The guests were talking vociferously on the terrace and the words "suspected," "robbery," "immense value" were bandied about. In brief, a serious robbery had been committed and Lady Brabazon's jewels had been stolen. The topic occupied everybody for the day, and the wildest and most unlikely conjectures were hazarded as to the nationality of the thief and the method of his procedure. A little later the reports were absurdly contradictory. "This was the first robbery that had ever taken place at the hotel—" "There was a robbery regularly every season—" "Lady Brabazon's *parure* was worth £2,000—" "Lady Brabazon's *parure* was entirely paste."

The usual nine days passed, however, and the interest of all but the plundered lady and the hotel-keepers cooled. Cairo was soon to find a more absorbing topic of conversation.

One evening Vera had retired early, tired with a long ride to the Mokattam Hills, and Bevil was intending to sit on the terrace. To avoid a twentieth description of the robbery from Sir David whom he saw bearing down upon him, he strolled down the steps

into the open place. He had not gone far when he was accosted by a thin man in a black coat and red fez. Thinking he was one of the usual crowd of applicants for *baksheesh* Bevil hurried on, but hearing the man say something about the robbery and mention the name of Lady Brabazon he stopped.

"Does the *kha-wâ-gah* *Ingleeze* [English gentleman] want to find all the things for the *sitt* [lady]? If he will come with me he can," said the man. "Look here"—and he showed a bracelet of sparkling diamonds.

There was no mistake about this action, and Bevil, thinking he might be on the scent, stopped under one of the oil lamps which were suspended from the branches of the trees few and far between. He now saw that the speaker was a negro and that he undoubtedly had some superb diamonds in his black fingers.

"Give me those," said the Englishman.

He laid them in Bevil's hand and beckoned him to come a little further, pointing to a small booth near a clump of trees where there were some other figures. Assured by the man's readiness to give him up the jewels he followed, but directly he stepped out of the ring of the lamplight he was struck down by a violent blow with a stick which laid him stunned on the ground. Two strong slaves caught him up, muffled his head in a shawl and carried him to a carriage which stood waiting. The man who had accosted him took the bracelet from his hand with a quiet laugh, and gave a few directions to the coachman and the slaves. Then he got into another carriage in which a dwarf was seated, and the two carriages drove away into the darkness.

## V.

THE particulars of Brereton's seizure were obtained long afterwards from a pencil narrative written by himself. Neither his friends nor the authorities had anything to go upon. A waiter at the hotel saw him light a cigar and

go down the steps about ten o'clock. Nothing more was known. The open space before Shephard's was ill-lighted, and was not considered very safe after dark; but no disappearance like this had ever been recorded, and indeed robberies of Englishmen were not frequent. The police arrangements at Cairo were slovenly, but they had a certain vigour of procedure which detected crime when it was understood that the Government was in earnest. The English Foreign Office wrote despatches, and the Consul-General had interviews with the Pasha. The native authorities were pressed so hard that they were shaken out of their apathy, and spared neither threats, bribes, nor beatings, but nothing could be ascertained. From that February night Bevil Brereton vanished, and all record of him was obliterated.

I have read all the official correspondence which passed relating to "the remarkable disappearance of an Englishman," and examined files of newspapers to find all the printed information on the subject, but, as I said before, it is inaccurate and inconsistent. A draft of a will was found in his letter-case, leaving all his property to Vera Cathcart, but it was unsigned. His money, I believe, reverted to the Crown, falling kin. The names of Sir David Brabazon and Keith Grey are prominent in the correspondence about him. Some urgent business took the Cathcarts away from Egypt a month after the disappearance. I will not write that the wretchedness of Vera can be imagined, because grief like hers is precisely what cannot be imagined. She did not fall into a fever or suffer any injury to the brain, only the wearying disappointment—the daily hope, and the daily baffling of that hope—ate away her power of feeling happiness, and at last she learned the lesson so many have to learn from the stern schooling of trial (but few from a stroke so ghastly and sharp as hers) that "existence could be cherished, strengthened and fed without the aid of joy."

She did her daily duties, interested herself in the interests of those about her. Then at last, when her parents died, she joined a nursing sisterhood, and worked in a London hospital.

## VI.

It was the summer of 1883. Ismail had reigned and been deposed. Arabi's rebellion had been crushed, and England was occupying Egypt. She had a hard task to bring order into chaos, and now her reforms were thrown back by a violent epidemic of cholera. Since Bevil and Vera plighted their troth to each other, a new Cairo had arisen, and boulevards and wide streets had taken the place of the groves of palms and sycamores. But the huge houses were deserted. The long colonnades usually crowded with loungers dining, or smoking, or gambling, were empty. The *cafés* were tenantless, save where a solitary waiter cowered behind his bar expecting not customers, but grim Death. Fires were lighted in the streets, and rolled volumes of smoke over the town. The dirge-like chants of the native mourners hurrying their kinsfolk to the cemeteries were almost the only sounds audible.

The English had established a hospital for wounded soldiers shortly after the war, and a call had been made for experienced nurses. Vera had answered the call, and was now once more in Cairo. She could not account for the eagerness with which she read the summons to go out at once. Half an hour after seeing the appeal, she sent a telegram to offer herself as a candidate, and now a pale, grey-haired woman, as different from the joyous girl of thirty years ago as Constance is from Beatrice, she moved about the little hospital which was crowded with cholera patients, doing her duty accurately and sympathetically from long training, but with a feeling of the dreaminess of all the surroundings and an expectation of being drawn ever nearer and nearer to an end that com-



bined to make her begin every day with a sort of awe. But no weird imagination had fashioned, and no nightmare vision foreshown, any end so dreadful as that which came. Several English doctors had arrived in Cairo to study the epidemic, and to treat the patients. Their attention was called naturally to the general state of sanitary science or nescience in Egypt, and they had full powers to examine and report. Amongst these was a certain Dr. Markland, who belonged to the London hospital where Vera had nursed. He came to see her directly he arrived, and thinking she was looking over-worked, he told her to come at once for a drive with him. They hurried through the deserted streets, baking in the hot pestilence-laden air, and, hoping for a taste of purer and cooler breath, turned off towards Abbásiyeh.

They got clear of the houses, and at last were fairly in the desert.

"Do you know what that red building is?" asked Markland.

"No," said Vera. "I have never been here before, but we can ask that gentleman. He is an army-chaplain, just come from burying some poor fellow in the desert."

They stopped the clergyman, and learned that the building was an Arab lunatic asylum.

"I should like to see it," said Markland. "We will try and get in."

They drove up to the gate which was shut but not barred. The porter refused admission at first, but gave way when he saw Markland meant to get in. Then it turned out that there were at that moment an English doctor and a high official compelling the place to disclose its secrets. They met Markland and the sister in the first corridor.

"Markland, thank God you have come! Sir Charles and I have just found something which seems too ghastly to be true. This place is hell."

And it was. In another moment they heard from above yells, shrieks,

and laughter, and pushing aside a few quaking warders went up stairs and entered the largest of the wards. There were lines of half-naked men sitting on their bedsteads, some chained, all filthy, diseased, and half-starved. The stench was loathsome, the air fetid. The doctor inquired through an Arab interpreter who had accompanied Sir Charles some particulars of the cases, but little was known. The patients had all been brought into the palace five years ago from an asylum at Bulak now disused. Up to that time the place had been called the Gem Palace, and had been occupied by a royal princess who was now dead. The interpreter spoke of her with a lowered voice and a look around as if he half expected she would punish him for mentioning her name. Sir Charles asked if they saw all the inmates.

"No; there was another room."

They crossed and found opposite the men's ward a similar room containing about forty women. Here again were chains, nakedness and dirt. Then came a court-yard where the less violent patients herded. A sheikh, repeating hundreds of times over one verse from the Koran, sat in the midst of his circle of wondering worshippers, while a hideous swollen-headed boy gibbered and mowed at him. A deformed man twisted and writhed along on the ground fancying himself a snake. A huge negro chained to a tree kept up all day a loud, monotonous roar. Again Sir Charles asked if he had seen all.

"Yes; all but the man below."

"Take us to him."

They went down to the basement story and passed through several large rooms. Many of them showed on the walls patches of gold and painting, and were furnished with divans covered with magenta satin once splendid but now mouldy and tattered. Some of the palace furniture had been left to rot in the mad-house. At last they reached a barred dungeon-cell. The key at first was not to be found, but after much delay the special warder, a one-eyed Soudanese, was hunted up and



forced to unlock the door. The room was very high, lighted by a grated aperture close to the ceiling. Through this streamed a struggling ray of the afterglow which was then suffusing the Red Mountain with a magic light. The ray fell on a man's face, very haggard and thin and nearly hidden by an overgrowth of white beard and moustache. His body was clothed in a ragged silk dressing-gown, and he lay on a native bedstead of palm twigs. A red leather cushion from one of the palace divans was placed under his head. There were staples and rings in the walls to which chains had been affixed, and the red marks of fetters showed on his wrists and ankles.

"It is a dead man," said Sir Charles.

The doctors felt the pulse.

"No — not yet. Send for some wine."

"I have a flask with some brandy."

The sister had followed them in and approached the bed. She bent over it and put away the long white hair from the features of the prisoner.

"He looks like an Englishman," said Markland.

A cry bitter with the bitterness of the utmost suffering came from the

kneeling woman,—"Oh, my God! my God! Bevil! Bevil!"

He lived for a month tended by Vera with passionate care, but he never recovered consciousness nor ever recognised his faithful love. A pocket-book and diary containing a few entries were found in the room. From these I have put together the facts connected with his disappearance. There were a few lines describing an interview with the princess, from which her motive in having him seized could be gathered.

After this discovery the huge rambling Gem Palace was thoroughly searched, and abundant evidences of strange deeds done and ghastly sufferings endured were found in its secret cells and winding galleries. In a disguised well choked with brambles and hidden by a hedge of prickly pear the workmen found the bones of a dwarf. Idris had probably been detected in playing false to his terrible mistress and had been summarily punished.

The last time I was in Egypt I found the grave of Bevil Brereton in the beautiful little English cemetery near the aqueduct of Salâheddin in Old Cairo.

C. H. BUTCHER.

## LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK.

OF A DISCOURSE IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

NOTHING, said Montaigne, is so firmly believed as that which is least known. This whimsy appears to receive some confirmation from a passage in the speech delivered by Lord Coleridge on unveiling the bust of Matthew Arnold in Westminster Abbey. It is, I will hope, no proof of brutal insolence to ask whether that speech might not have been more apt to the occasion had it been something less controversial? When the friends and admirers of a distinguished man are assembled to do honour to his memory, it surely seems, to say the least of it, unnecessary to remind them how bitterly his claims to that honour have been disputed. And surely it was something more than unnecessary to heap such scorn on those who, while cordially admitting Arnold's claims on our grateful remembrance, have yet ventured to doubt whether he was equally admirable in all the many subjects on which he exercised his delicate and delightful talents. In that solemn spot, "that temple of silence and reconciliation, where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried," it should have been possible to praise the dead sufficiently without reviling the living. And after all what is their crime? Lord Coleridge very justly observed that it is as yet too soon to pronounce a final judgment on Arnold's work. It is much too soon. These matters are not determined by a man's contemporaries. So that what his lordship had to say on this head really amounted to no more than that he did not agree with those who differed from him, which might perhaps have been assumed.

In commenting on those criticisms passed on Arnold's work, both during his lifetime and since, which appeared

to him "altogether beside the mark,"—and beside the mark they must indeed be, if his lordship has hit it—Lord Coleridge named Jeffrey as the most signal instance of the incapacity of a bad critic to permanently injure the fame of a good writer. "Lord Jeffrey," he said, "did his best to crush Wordsworth; he injured for a time the sale of his poems, but he has not affected his fame in the slightest degree,—he has only manifested his own hopeless incompetence."

We have all heard this sort of thing many times before. Jeffrey has been the common butt of critics for the last thirty years. Except Mr. Saintsbury (in an article originally contributed to this magazine and republished in *Essays in English Literature*), I cannot think of any one who has ventured to say a good word for him; and I doubt whether even Mr. Saintsbury has persuaded more than a very few to look into the matter for themselves. "All his vivacity and accomplishments avail him nothing; of the true critic he had in an eminent degree no quality except one—curiosity. Curiosity he had, but he had no organ for truth; he cannot illuminate and rejoice us; no intelligent outpost of the new generation cares about him, cares to put him in safety; at this moment we are all passing over his body." Such was Arnold's own verdict, delivered more than a quarter of a century ago, and the world, it is to be feared, has gone on passing over the poor little body ever since till there is hardly a fragment of it left to remind them what once lay beneath their feet. "For a spirit of any delicacy and dignity," cried Arnold, "what a fate if he could

foresee it! To be an oracle for one generation, and then of little or no account for ever." Well, it is the common lot of critics, however dignified and delicate, and by a merciful dispensation one they do not as a rule foresee. Nor perhaps is there any good reason why Jeffrey should be exempted from it. Our criticism of our contemporaries cannot in reason have much interest for posterity. For the majority of a man's contemporaries posterity, he may be very sure, will care nothing, will not even care to know anything. In this respect Jeffrey was indeed fortunate above most men. He practised his business in an age distinguished for great names above all other ages in English literature save one. Yet it matters not to us how Byron and Scott, Wordsworth and Keats, Shelley and Coleridge looked to Jeffrey; the matter is how they look to us. And Jeffrey, it must be owned, is not interesting to study for his own sake. He has not the charm of an attractive personality or an attractive style. It has often been said that no writer will live, whatever his other qualities may be, who has not a style to keep him sweet; it is at least certain that no critic will live who has it not. Jeffrey was far indeed, as Mr. Saintsbury has shown, from being the narrow, purblind, rather ill-natured dullard that popular ignorance now pictures him; but I cannot think that any other feeling than curiosity is likely to be satisfied by disinterring his volumes from the dust and silence of the upper shelf.

Yet if we do not care to study him we might at least leave him alone. It is surely hard even on a man who has been in his grave for the best part of fifty years to assert that he has only proved his hopeless incompetence in something that we have not been at the pains to read. It would be natural enough to find Lord Coleridge's pet aversion, the irresponsible reviewer tricked out in a little brief authority, tripping in this way; but in a critic

and a man of letters of his lordship's acknowledged position, we do not expect to find it. Yet it looks much as though we had found it. No man has judged Wordsworth so truly and finely as Matthew Arnold, no man has sent so many intelligent and appreciative readers to him. Yet if Jeffrey is to be blamed for the hopeless incompetence of his estimate of Wordsworth's poetry, it is hard to see how Arnold is to go scot free. Any one who cares to learn what Jeffrey really wrote of Wordsworth, will be surprised to find on how many points he is at one with Arnold. The popular estimate of his critical capacities is based, I suspect, on the notion that his famous phrase, *This will never do*, was applied to Wordsworth's poetry indiscriminately. But the phrase was applied to *The Excursion* only, and only to certain parts of *The Excursion*. Has it not been justified? Much of *The Excursion*, too much of it, has never done and never will do. What does Matthew Arnold say of it? "Although Jeffrey completely failed to recognise Wordsworth's real greatness, he was yet not wrong in saying of *The Excursion* as a work of poetic style, 'This will never do.'" What does Mr. John Morley say of it—Mr. Morley to whose power of critical biography Lord Coleridge has paid a graceful compliment? "Besides being prolix Wordsworth is often cumbrous; has often no flight; is not liquid, is not musical. He is heavy and self-conscious with the burden of his message. . . . He is apt to wear a somewhat stiff-cut garment of solemnity, when not solemnity, but either sternness or sadness, which are so different things, would seem the fitter mood." And these defects, Mr. Morley adds, are specially oppressive in some parts of *The Excursion*. True, Mr. Morley warns the student that "not seldom in these blocks of afflicting prose suddenly we come upon some of the profoundest and most beautiful passages that the poet ever wrote." Jeffrey's warning is to the same effect, though conveyed in the more conventional language of

his school. "Besides these more extended passages of interest and beauty which we have quoted or omitted to quote, there are scattered up and down the book, and in the midst of its most repulsive portions a very great number of single lines and images that sparkle like gems in the desert, and startle us by an intimation of the great poetic powers that lie buried in the rubbish that has been heaped around them."

It is not easy to be certain how much if any, injury, Jeffrey's criticism did to the sale of Wordsworth's poems; but one may doubt if it could have been so much as the injury Wordsworth did them by his hopeless inability to distinguish between his good and bad work. On this inability Arnold has justly commented, as forming one of the chief obstacles to the poet's fame, and his own chief motive for publishing the excellent little volume of selections which has probably gained more readers for Wordsworth in the last dozen years than he was able to gain for himself during the whole of his long lifetime. "*The Excursion* and *The Prelude*, his poems of greatest bulk, are by no means Wordsworth's best work. His best work is in his shorter pieces, and many indeed are there of these which are of first-rate excellence. But in his seven volumes the pieces of high merit are mingled with a mass of pieces very inferior to them; so inferior to them that it seems wonderful how the same poet should have produced both. Shakespeare frequently has lines and passages in a strain quite false, and which are entirely unworthy of him. But one can imagine his smiling, if one could meet him in the Elysian Fields and tell him so; smiling and replying that he knew it perfectly well himself, and what did it matter? But with Wordsworth the case is quite different. Work altogether inferior, work quite uninspired, flat and dull, is produced by him with evident unconsciousness of its defects, and he presents it to us with the same faith and seriousness as his best work.

Now a drama or an epic fill the mind, and one does not look beyond them; but in a collection of short pieces the impression made by one piece requires to be continued and sustained by the piece following. In reading Wordsworth the impression made by one of his fine pieces is too often dulled and spoiled by a very inferior piece coming after it." When Arnold writes in this style of Wordsworth,—when he talks of the mass of inferior work, of poetical baggage "imbedding and clogging" the first-rate work, "obstructing our approach to it, chilling not infrequently the high-wrought mood with which we leave it,"—when he puts readers on their guard against that "scientific system of thought" which some of the poet's injudicious admirers have praised as his most precious quality, against the "tissue of elevated but abstract verbiage" posing as poetry, but really alien to its very nature—we do not say that the critic has done his best to crush the poet. Why should Jeffrey be charged with that intention when we find him writing to much the same effect, though in a coarser, a less discriminative vein?

For it must be owned that our fathers did not pick their terms so daintily as we have learned to do. When they found an offender they thought that they did well to be angry with him; or if they preferred to use ridicule to him, they used it often somewhat cumbrously. Those were rough days, when men were handier with the bludgeon than the rapier. But they were not always so far out in the objects of their censure as it is the fashion to assume. Lord Coleridge applies the term "brutal insolence" to the criticism of the *Quarterly Review* on Keats and on the early poems of Lord Tennyson. It doubtless contains much that is intolerable to our more delicate natures, and to what we are pleased to think our finer sense of justice. Yet who will say that there was not much to censure in both volumes? One may say indeed of the critic (who is now

known to have been Croker, and believed on the second occasion to have been much edited by Lockhart), what Johnson said of Dennis' strictures on *Cato*: "His dislike was not merely capricious. He found and shewed many faults; he shewed them indeed with anger, but he found them with acuteness." How finely Keats could criticise himself we know. Lord Tennyson can answer for himself. Perhaps Lord Coleridge has not read the article on the *Poems* of 1832 very lately. Should he care to refresh his memory, he may be surprised to find to what an extent the poet thought right to vindicate the critic. Many of the pieces disappeared altogether—though a few have indeed been partially restored in the latest edition under the head of *Juvenilia*. Most of those that were retained were subjected to an unsparing revision; *The Lotos Eaters* and *The Miller's Daughter*, for instance, are hardly recognisable in their first drafts as the poems which are as familiar to the present generation of Englishmen as *Marmion* and *The Giaour* were familiar to their fathers. For nearly fifty years the world has known Lord Tennyson for a great poet; but only those who have compared his genius in its immaturity with his genius in its prime can appreciate how great he could also be as a critic.

I do not of course mean to say that, apart from the manner in which it was conveyed, there is no difference between Arnold's estimate of Wordsworth and Jeffrey's estimate. Arnold praised Wordsworth far more cordially and unreservedly than Jeffrey did, and handled his faults far more tenderly. It was in Arnold's nature to do so, and in the nature of the method of criticism he advocated and practised. I only say that the difference between the two critics is not on this point so great as is commonly supposed. We should remember too that Wordsworth's poetry did not come with the shock of a surprise on Arnold as it came on Jeffrey. Arnold has rebuked

certain unwise disciples for their indiscriminate idolatry, which has retarded instead of advancing the master's fame. The poet, he says, must be recommended "not in the spirit of a clique, but in the spirit of disinterested lovers of poetry." Yet at the end of it all he is fain to confess himself a Wordsworthian with the best (or the worst) of them. "It is not for nothing," he says, "that one has been brought up in the veneration of a man so truly worthy of homage; that one has seen and heard him, lived in his neighbourhood and been familiar with his country. No Wordsworthian has a tenderer affection for this pure and sage master than I, or is less really offended by his defects." When censuring our fathers for their blindness we are apt to forget the inevitable difference between their point of view and ours. They were

Like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken.

They could recognise that it was something out of their experience; but what it signified, or all it signified, they could not yet tell, as we can tell who have grown up in its light, examined it from every side, and learned its value from a generation of experts. Many worthy souls, for example, were much startled, and even shocked, by a judgment delivered not very long ago by the Lord Chief Justice of England on the behaviour of certain members of the Salvation Army at Whitechurch. Posterity, after having enjoyed all the benefits it will by that time have conferred on mankind, will recognise that judgment at its true value. But will they therefore thunder at the hopeless incompetence of their sires who, in the first shock of a revelation which swept away at a stroke all their old-fashioned notions of law, justice, and common-sense, were unable to realise the full sum of its meaning for suffering humanity? We may be sure that they will not.

It may be said that the older critics

were too prone to look suspiciously at new comers, too quick to condemn all that they did not at once understand, all that was contrary to established law and usage. Brought up in a school of strict tradition they were certainly not tolerant of change. Yet the most tolerant among them—among his own school, I mean, which of course did not include Hazlitt and Lamb—was surely this very man who is now resuscitated for our scorn. He was on many points, as Mr. Saintsbury has reminded us, a Romantic, though a Romantic doubtless with something of the timidity which Johnson confessed to have felt in his revolt against the tyranny of the Dramatic Unities. Almost alone among his school he dared to stand up for Keats; he anticipated, and something more than anticipated, Arnold himself in distinguishing Dryden and Pope as classics not of our poetry but of "the age of prose and reason," and hailed with joy the herald of the emancipation in Cowper. Jeffrey, in short, proved, as critics of every age, most assuredly not excluding our own, have proved the truth of Arnold's words, "No man can trust himself to speak of his own time, and of his own contemporaries with the same sureness of judgment and the same proportion as of times and men gone by." But our fathers' errors are not ours. They were too prone to distrust what they could not at once understand; we welcome it with rapture. They were too apt to mistake originality for eccentricity; we mistake eccentricity for originality. They kept their eyes a little too closely fixed on law and custom; we hail the violation of all custom and all law as the essential note of genius. On which side lies the greater error our posterity shall determine. It was not the least of Matthew Arnold's claims to acceptance as a critic that he for the most part kept such an even course between the two extremes. Goethe said that no criticism was worth much that was not influenced by a certain one-sided enthusiasm. Perhaps; but perhaps

also one had need to be a Goethe to go safely by that rule.

Like all wholesome natures Matthew Arnold did not affect to be indifferent to praise, nor perhaps even to a reasonable amount of flattery from quarters where flattery is always privileged and pleasant. But against the indiscriminate homage of a clique his sense of the ridiculous and his sense of proportion equally warned him. He warned others against it in the case of writers whom he greatly and sincerely admired, Milton, Goethe, Byron, Wordsworth; he would assuredly not have seen it applied to himself with complacency. To hear himself credited with all the best qualities of men so highly and variously gifted as Horace and Cardinal Newman, Thackeray and Dr. Lightfoot, Professor Jowett and Mr. Morley, could never have been to his taste. But there was one phrase applied to him by Lord Coleridge which he would not have repudiated,—a striver after Truth, though he would have preferred to be called a seeker. It was his own phrase. "To try and approach Truth on one side after another, not to strive or cry, not to persist in pressing forward on any one side, with violence and self-will,"—thus, and only thus, was such measure of Truth as is ever vouchsafed to mortals, in his opinion to be won. This was the praise he gave to his friend Clough; it was the praise he claimed for himself:

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,  
Shy to illumine; and I seek it too.

This does not come with houses or  
with gold,

With place, with honour, and a flattering  
crew;

'Tis not in the world's market bought  
and sold—

But the smooth-slipping weeks  
Drop by, and leave its seeker still un-  
tired;

Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,  
He wends unfollowed, he must house  
alone;

Yet on he fares, by his own heart in-  
spired.

"We are all seekers still!" he cried.



But he was careful to add: "Seekers often make mistakes."

#### OF A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

Emerson was one of the kindest and best-tempered of men, but his forbearance is said to have been once sorely tried by finding a letter he had written privately and in all friendship to Thoreau used as an advertisement for one of that philosopher's books. Emerson had little taste for the peculiar affectations which Thoreau chose to dignify by the name of philosophy; but he had a generous sympathy for all forms of suffering humanity, and it was this sympathy doubtless rather than his judgment that had inspired his commendations of Thoreau's new work. For a man of delicacy and dignity the situation must indeed have been embarrassing.

One cannot but wonder whether Mr. Gladstone does not sometimes find himself in a similar situation, and is not equally embarrassed. He writes, as is well known, many letters, and it is hardly credible that all one reads under his hand was intended for publication. The other day, for instance, an extract was printed in a newspaper from a letter written by him to the author of a novel: "I congratulate you," it ran, "on *The Scapegoat* as a work of art, and especially upon the noble and spiritually drawn character of Israel."

The author of *The Scapegoat* is Mr. Hall Caine. The book, he says, is "less novel than romance, and less romance than poem." These distinctions are never so easy for a reader to draw as for an author, who must needs know what he would be at better than any one else. Speaking plainly, the book is in two volumes and in prose, was first published, with pictures, in one of our illustrated papers, and deals with the condition of the Jews in Morocco. Mr. Caine has also written *The Bondman* (which is neither novel, romance, nor poem, but a saga), and *The Deemster* (which does not appear to have

been so accurately defined). Both these books have been much praised, and one at least much read. Of *The Deemster* I cannot find any particular records; but of *The Bondman* (which is now in its fourth edition) the praise appears to have been unanimous. A fly-leaf in *The Scapegoat* is devoted to its predecessor's glory. One critic finds its leading characters of "colossal grandeur"; another opines its argument to be "grand" and its power "almost marvellous"; a third (with some faint memory perhaps of Mr. Wopple's famous interpretation of the character of Hamlet) sees "a touch of almost Homeric power in its massive and grand simplicity"; while a fourth, outsoaring all his fellows, boldly proclaims it to be "distinctly ahead of all the fictional literature of our time, and fit to rank with the most powerful fictional writing of the past century." It is not for me to say that this praise is excessive, who have never read *The Bondman* and only a few chapters of *The Deemster*. But with *The Scapegoat* I have been more fortunate.

General terms of praise, as of blame, cannot easily be gainsaid. A man may say he likes a book, or dislikes it, and there is an end of it. But Mr. Gladstone has selected certain particular qualities of *The Scapegoat* for his commendation; he praises it as a work of art, and for the noble and spiritually drawn character of its hero. It is for this that, after reading the book, I could not but wonder whether Mr. Gladstone had picked his words quite so carefully as he would have done had he anticipated the use to which they would be put.

For in sober truth, sweet, tender, spiritual, imaginative, dramatic as *The Scapegoat* may be (these epithets are culled from the effusions of another and anonymous critic), its greatness as a work of art is not clearly manifest to me. Novel, romance, or poem, whatever it is to be called, it will be read and regarded by the general public as a story, a narrative of cer-

tain events which came, or may be supposed to have come, under the narrator's knowledge and in which he played a certain part. From this point of view its construction appears to me to be somewhat defective, I would even say clumsy, might I venture to put such an epithet in juxtaposition with so many flattering ones. It opens with an introduction wherein the story-teller, sojourning in Tetuan at the time of the chief Mahomedan festival, witnesses the entry of the Sultan into that city. Among the ladies of his Majesty's harem is one, not riding on a mule as the others ride, but carried in a litter swung between two white Arabian horses. An opportune stumble of one of the horses enables the curious watcher to catch a glimpse of the face of the lady thus honoured, and it was the face, as he thought, of a beautiful English girl. He is interested—if one dared to use so vulgar a phrase, one would say he had fallen in love at first sight; he makes enquiries, discovers that the girl is not English but a Moorish Jewess, and had just been presented by the governor of the town to his lord the Sultan. He is determined to release her, and he does release her; moreover he marries her, takes her to his home in England, and (let us all hope), lives happily with her ever after. But before this sweet consummation can be effected, her previous story and the story of her father have to be told. This is done in the form of an independent narrative. The reader is thus carried backwards and forwards, and forwards and backwards, from one stage of time to another, and from one mode of narrative to another, till he needs some effort of memory to recall at any given moment exactly where he is and to whom he is listening. And this complication makes a sentence in the preface especially puzzling. Mr. Caine apologises for the romantic or poetic character of his novel by the preoccupation of his heart with "the spiritual love of a noble man and a beautiful woman." Who is the noble

man? If Israel, is the beautiful woman his wife Ruth or his daughter Naomi? If the former, the occupation of Mr. Caine's heart must soon have gone, for Ruth is dead at an early stage of the proceedings. If the latter, the love of a father for his daughter should be spiritual no doubt, even in Morocco, yet even in Morocco surely not so uncommon or distracting a circumstance as to absorb all an author's interest in his work. If the noble man be the narrator himself, surely it is somewhat inartistic to keep the chief inspiration of a story out of sight during the greater part of its progress. Possibly I am wrong—and I recognise fully how much easier it is to dogmatise about fiction than to write it; but, considered as a work of art, a work requiring a regular construction and evolution, this method of story-telling appears not entirely satisfactory.

Again, has Mr. Caine altogether succeeded in the design of his book? That design appears to be—among other things, of course, for no man whatever the grandeur of his conception and the integrity of his aim, can afford wholly to despise the sweet influences of the commercial spirit—to alleviate the condition of the Jews in Morocco, and generally to stir up the Christian Powers to see to it that that land shall no longer be "a reproach to Europe, a disgrace to the century, an outrage on humanity, a blight on religion!" There is no disputing the fact that in Mr. Caine's Morocco the Jews are considerably harassed by their Moslem masters, and it is at least conceivable that they do not fare very much better in the Morocco of Sultan Muley Hassan. But surely he had done better to be more careful to enlist our sympathies with the objects of his compassion. Except for the girl Naomi and her mother Ruth, there seems uncommonly little to choose between Jew and Mahomedan. The rich Mahomedans harry the Jews, and the Jews harry the poor Mahomedans,—and each other. It is not impossi-

ble that this is so in reality ; but the question is not one of reality, not of that truth to plain fact after which Mr. Caine seems to have toiled, but of art. If Abraham Pigman (a curious name for a Jew !), Judah ben Lolo, and Reuben Malaki are typical representatives of the objects of Moorish tyranny, then for my poor part I am inclined to think that Pigman, Lolo, and Malaki met with something very like their deserts. And what of the hero, the Scapegoat himself, Israel ben Oliei, the noble and spiritually drawn Israel ? Throughout the greater part of the book he is the biggest rogue of them all. For twenty years of his life he is the chief and the willing instrument of the Cadi in tormenting and plundering the people of his blood and faith, and this he does in revenge for being robbed of his inheritance through the intrigues of his own family. True he repents at the eleventh hour, hoping thereby to win the mercy of Heaven for his daughter Naomi who has been deaf, dumb, and blind from her birth. He wins it, but at a terrible price. He loses the favour of his former employers without gaining the favour of his former victims, for Pigman and his kind, who hated their oppressor in the day of his prosperity, are not likely to spare him in the perilous time. Old, poor, persecuted, reviled, his wife dead, his child torn from him, Israel makes no doubt a pitiful figure. Yet in our pity we cannot forget that after all the measure meted out to him is but that he has measured to others. Nor is he truly a scapegoat ; he suffers not for the sins of others but for his own. Now in all this Mr. Caine has, I would submit, committed an artistic blunder. That these are the very Jews of Morocco I do not dispute. I know nothing of them, whereas Mr. Caine claims to have seen and studied them in their own place. But are these the Jews for whom it is safe to ask, to insist upon our sympathy, for the author's method is one rather of insistence than entreaty ? Is Pigman, is even

Israel himself, a figure likely to stir the Christian heart of Europe to a holy crusade against the iniquities of Moorish rule ? Mr. Caine has been placed by one of his critics on a level with Walter Scott at his best. Well, Scott once tried his hand at enlisting our sympathy for a Jew and his daughter, being moved thereto, as Lockhart tells us, by the account given to him by his friend Skene of the austerities with which the race was still even in his time treated in Germany. Scott knew nothing but what his friend told him, and what his medieval reading had furnished him with. Yet who has succeeded best, Mr. Caine with Israel and Naomi, or Sir Walter Scott with Isaac and Rebecca ?

A word as to the style of this book, which has been so highly praised. As a reporter of the fact Mr. Caine has undoubtedly conspicuous merits. He can describe a scene vividly ; he has, as they say of painters, an eye for colour ; his picture of the Sultan's entry into Tetuan is a very spirited and graphic piece of work, and there are many other pictures throughout the two volumes entitled to the same praise. But he is too fond, in a metaphorical sense, of using italics and capitals ; he writes always at a white heat ; he does not sufficiently distinguish between what is essential and what is only accidental. The eye for colour and fact, the power of description and narrative, avail nothing without the sense of proportion, without the faculty of selecting, shaping, controlling. With Mr. Caine every molehill is a mountain and every shrub a forest tree. It is the same with his language. He has a rich and picturesque vocabulary, but he is too lavish in its use, too fond of what Johnson has happily called the Terrific Diction. "There are men," said the sage, "who seem to think nothing so much the characteristic of a genius as to do common things in an uncommon manner ; like Hudibras, to tell the clock by algebra ; or like the lady in Dr. Young's satires, to drink tea by stratagem." Perhaps

an even better illustration of Mr. Caine's manner might be found in a famous criticism made not *by* but *on* Johnson; Mr. Caine is too apt to make his sprats talk like whales. "Strange things" are for ever about to happen, and when they have happened they are not found to be so very strange. Nothing is more irritating to a reader than this habit, or more likely to render him blind to an author's real powers. Nothing can be farther removed from the "massive and grand simplicity" of the Homeric manner. Matthew Arnold has described the style of one of Shelley's biographers as too much suffused with sentiment and poetic fervour for a prose writer, and himself to have been at times so much agitated by it as to be obliged to take refuge in a drier world. One feels, I think, something of the same agitation when borne along on the full torrent of Mr. Caine's eloquence. I remember, when reading passages of *The Scapegoat* from the illustrated paper in which it was originally published, to have experienced much relief in turning occasionally to the drier world provided by the other entertainments to be found in such journals, portraits of distinguished athletes, professors, and politicians, fashion-plates, chess-problems, and so forth.

And this lack of proportion leads Mr. Caine into another error. He tells us, and we can clearly see, that he has been at much labour to acquire the correct "local atmosphere" of his story, by acquainting himself, under skilled guidance, with the homes and lives of the Jews of Morocco and by studying their ceremonial law. Such labour is highly meritorious, and when the knowledge thus won is discreetly

used it undoubtedly adds much to the sense of reality. Yet this also can prove a stone of stumbling, and such it has too often proved to Mr. Caine. When we read, as we read on almost every page, of *jellabs* and *ginbri*, of *káks* and *zummetta*, of soldiers gorgeous in *shasheah* and *selham*, of the balls of Charoseth, the three Mitzvoth, and the day of the night of the Seder, we feel that the local atmosphere is growing oppressive rather than luminous; we are reminded of that wise ancient who objected to the use of strange words which stop a reader as a reef stops a ship, or, if in a flippant mood, perhaps our memory strays to the Eastern Serenade of Bon Gaultier. Mr. Caine too often forgets that he is writing not for the Jews of Morocco but for the Christians of England.

Industry, seriousness, earnestness of purpose and integrity of aim are good things, and less common perhaps than they should be; belief in one's self, when not pushed too far, is no bad thing. All these qualities may be cordially granted to Mr. Hall Caine. But they are not sufficient to make an artist, though they may be a necessary complement to him. It is not possible, I think, to call *The Scapegoat* a work of art, if one attaches any serious meaning to the phrase. It is hard perhaps to blame even a real artist in these times for condescending to supplement his native art with the arts of advertisement. But he will at least be expected to use them artistically, with a due sense of fitness and proportion, and above all things to remember the eternal truth of the saying that the reputation of a book is determined not by what is written about it but by what is written in it.